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THE DENVER MAGAZINE

MUSIC FESTS

THE 5280 GUIDE TO COLORADO

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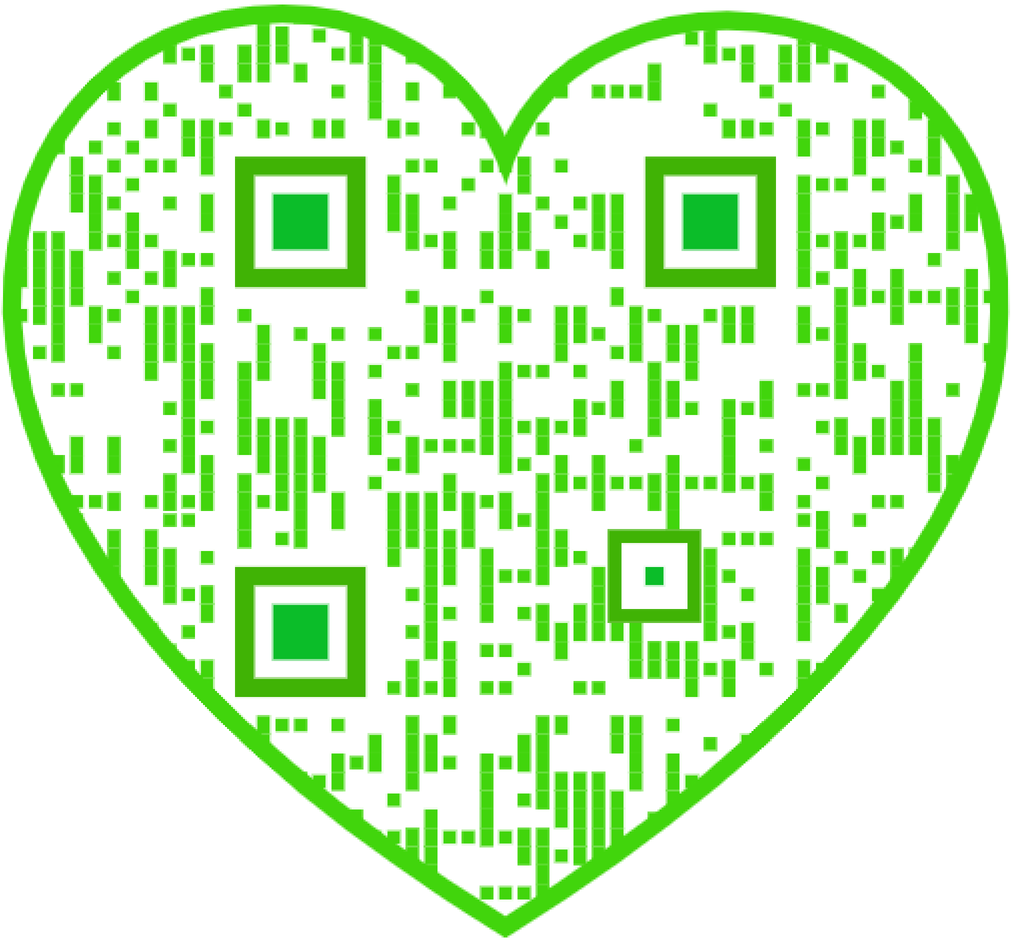

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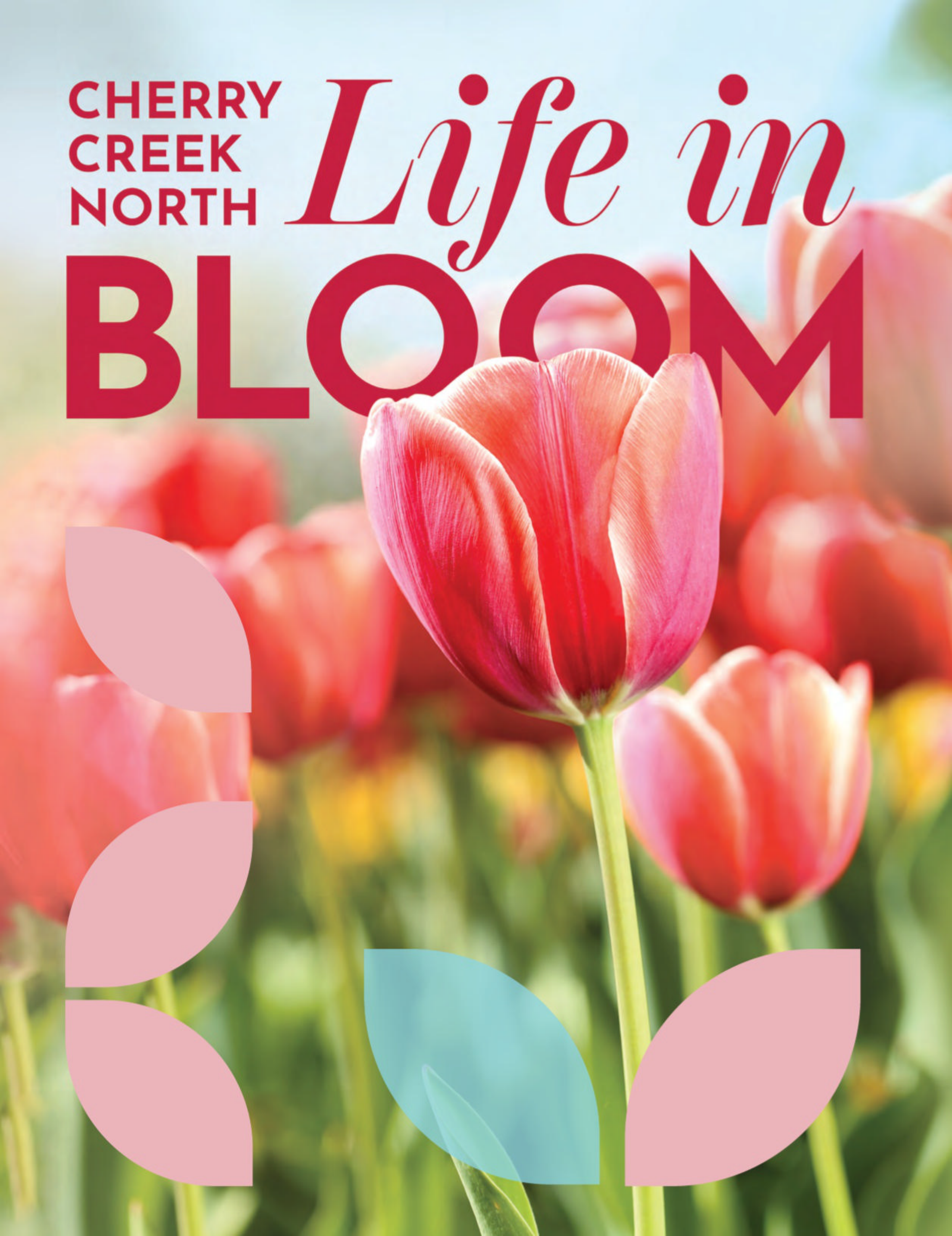

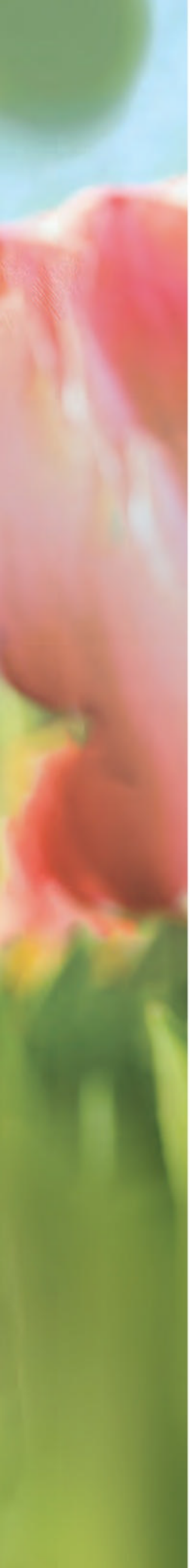

2025 SUMMER EVENTS LISTING

Summer Concert Series

THURS, JUN 12, JUL 10, AUG 14 & SEPT 11

Chery Creek North's Summer Concerts Series is bigger and better than ever this year with "Throwback Thursdays!" Enjoy the very best of your favorite music and genres from the very best cover bands in Colorado.

Smash Fine Arts Festival: Spring & Summer Shows

SAT / SUN JUN 14 - 15 & AUG 9 - 10

These festivals feature top-shelf national artists as well as live music. Come join us for an experience that will delight the exquisite artisan in you!

Cherry Creek Arts Festival

FRI, JUL 4 - SUN, JUL 6

Produced by Cherry Arts, this nationally loved festival features 250 national and international artists, 14 performing artists, Creation Station with children's activities, food and interactive experiences.

Bastille Day: A French Fest

FRI, JUL 11 - SUN, JUL 13

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Sidewalk Sale

THURS, JUL 17 - SUN, JUL 20

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5280 Magazine's Top of the Town

THURS, JUL 17

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The Denver Metro Association of Realtors® (DMAR), an organization comprised of over 6,000 real estate professionals, hosted its annual Excellence Awards on April 17, 2025 at the Seawell Ballroom at the Denver Center of Performing Arts. The event recognized Denver metro's residential real estate top producers for 2024. Over 30 awards were presented for individuals, partnerships, projects, teams and offices as well as special recognition award categories.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Oliver Frascona Lifetime Achievement Award

Jan Reinhardt,
RE/MAX Alliance - Parker Office

Broker Manager of the Year

Malisa Miller Eakins,
West + Main Homes - Applewood

Realtor® of the Year

Jessica Reinhardt,
RE/MAX Alliance - Parker Office

Industry Partner of the Year

Jim Michael,
Steel Rhino Property Inspections

Rookie of the Year

Michelle Leachman,
eXp Realty

Rising Star

Bonnie Hirning,
eXp Realty

Support Person of the Year

Amy Herrington,
Kentwood Real Estate

Community Service Award

Barbee Lux,
Compass - Denver Tech Center

DMAR Emerging Champion

Cooper Thayer,
Keller Williams Action Realty

Pathways Award

Aimee Quaratino,
8z Real Estate, Denver Central

Angie Sudberry,
Invalesco Real Estate

Social Media Impact

Ryan Haarer,
LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek

TOP INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

Individual | $ Sales Production

Anne Dresser Kocur,
LIV Sotheby's International Realty, DTC

2. Jeff Plous, Hatch Realty
3. Dawn Raymond, Kentwood Real Estate Cherry Creek
4. Kylie Russell, LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek
5. Mckinze Casey, LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek

Individual | Number of Transactions

Hussein Garcia,
Keller Williams Downtown

2. Leo Rowen, RE/MAX of Cherry Creek
3. Anne Dresser Kocur, LIV Sotheby's International Realty, DTC
4. Jeff Plous, Hatch Realty
5. Jennifer Briseno, Success Realty Experts

TOP PARTNERSHIP AWARDS

Partnership | $ Sales Production

Maggie Armstrong & Trish Bragg,
LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek

2. Deviree Vallejo & Liz Richards, LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek
3. Debra Guy & Chris Harvey, RE/MAX of Cherry Creek
4. Gina Lorenzen & Kara Couzens, Kentwood Real Estate DTC
5. Karen Nichols & Corrie Lee, milehimodern

Partnership | Number of Transactions

Debra Guy & Chris Harvey,
RE/MAX of Cherry Creek

2. Symantha Rodriguez & Joy Castillo, Compass - Cherry Creek
3. Kristine Holvick & Diane Kreider, RE/MAX of Cherry Creek
4. Lauren Jensen & Nicole Lawson, milehimodern
5. Josh Larsen & Chad Goodale, Keller Williams Realty Urban Elite

TOP TEAM AWARDS

3-5 Members | $ Sales Production

The Behr Team,
LIV Sotheby's International Realty, DTC

2. Jason Cummings Group, Compass - Cherry Creek
3. Helm Weaver Helm, Compass - Cherry Creek
4. The Northrop Group, Compass - Cherry Creek
5. The Wolfe-Bouc Group, LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek

3-5 Members | Number of Transactions

JASON CUMMINGS GROUP

Jason Cummings Group,
Compass - Cherry Creek

2. The Behr Team, LIV Sotheby's International Realty, DTC
3. The Northrop Group, Compass - Cherry Creek
4. Team Duran, RE/MAX Alliance - Westminster Office
5. META Homes, RE/MAX Alliance - Westminster Office

6-15 Members | $ Sales Production

EmpowerHome Team Colorado, Keller Williams Realty DTC

2. The Monarch Group, Compass - Cherry Creek
3. Stoddard, Dana, Murphy, Barton, Bond and Cohen, Coldwell Banker Global Luxury Denver
4. The International Group, RE/MAX Professionals - Thornton
5. 5280 City Living Team, PorchLight Real Estate Group, Cherry Creek

6-15 Members | Number of Transactions

EmpowerHome Team Colorado, Keller Williams Realty DTC

2. The Monarch Group, Compass - Cherry Creek
3. The International Group, RE/MAX Professionals - Thornton
4. Stoddard, Dana, Murphy, Barton, Bond and Cohen, Coldwell Banker Global Luxury Denver
5. Uptown Realty Group, Compass - Cherry Creek

16-25 Members | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

Griffith Home Team, RE/MAX Professionals - Thornton

2. Community, Real Broker, LLC

26+ Members | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

Be One Team, Compass - Denver Tech Center

2. The Impact Group, Your Castle Real Estate, Central Office

TOP PROJECT AWARDS

Project | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

Gilda Zaragoza, Invalesco Real Estate

TOP OFFICE AWARDS

1-5 Agents | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

Metro Brokers Team Lassen

2. Hatch Realty
3. RealGroup
4. Denver Homes
5. Aloha Real Estate

6-10 Agents | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

Grant Real Estate Company

2. Corcoran Perry & Co. - Congress Park
3. Aspen Grove Real Estate Group

11-30 Agents | $ Sales Production

Camber Realty

2. RE/MAX Alliance Olde Town Arvada
3. LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Evergreen
4. Madison & Company Properties, Cherry Creek North
5. RE/MAX Alliance - Golden Office

11-30 Agents | Number of Transactions

RE/MAX Alliance Olde Town Arvada

2. Camber Realty
3. Madison & Company Properties, Cherry Creek North
4. LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Evergreen
5. RE/MAX Alliance - Golden Office

31-50 Agents | $ Sales Production

RE/MAX Professionals - Thornton

2. Kentwood Real Estate City Properties
3. PorchLight Real Estate Group, Cherry Creek
4. RE/MAX Alliance - Westminster Office
5. PorchLight Real Estate Group, Highlands

31-50 Agents | Number of Transactions

RE/MAX Professionals - Thornton

2. RE/MAX Alliance - Westminster Office
3. PorchLight Real Estate Group, Cherry Creek
4. Kentwood Real Estate City Properties
5. PorchLight Real Estate Group, Highlands

51-75 Agents | $ Sales Production

LIV Sotheby's International Realty, DTC

2. Kentwood Real Estate Cherry Creek
3. RE/MAX of Cherry Creek
4. 8z Real Estate, Denver Central

51-75 Agents | Number of Transactions

LIV Sotheby's International Realty, DTC

2. Kentwood Real Estate Cherry Creek
3. 8z Real Estate, Denver Central
4. RE/MAX of Cherry Creek

76-100 Agents | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

Kentwood Real Estate DTC

101-200 Agents | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

LIV Sotheby's International Realty, Cherry Creek

2. Madison & Company Properties, Greenwood Village

201+ Agents | $ Sales Production & Number of Transactions

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Every summer, the state's hills come alive with the sound of bluegrass—and country and jazz and rock and blues. Here's everything you need to know to heed their siren songs.

BY JESSICA LaRUSSO

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Life On The Edge

With greater room to roam, lower mortgage payments, and easy access to natural splendor, Denver's suburbs have long tempted even devout downtowners—and that was *before* they had great restaurants. These are eight of the most compelling satellites that orbit our urban core.

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BY LINDSEY B. KING

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Denver's Top Dentists

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Charley Crockett at the 2024 Telluride Bluegrass Festival

Suchitra Baker/Courtesy of Planet Bluegrass

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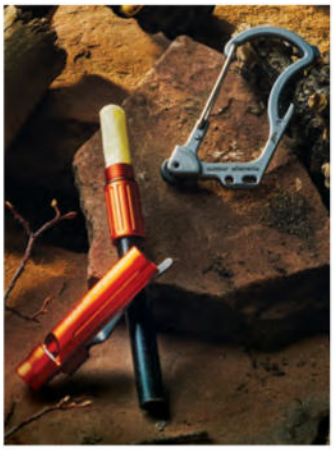

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Illustration by Serge Seidlitz

Clockwise from top left: Sarah Banks; Amanda López; Courtesy of Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network; Paul Miller

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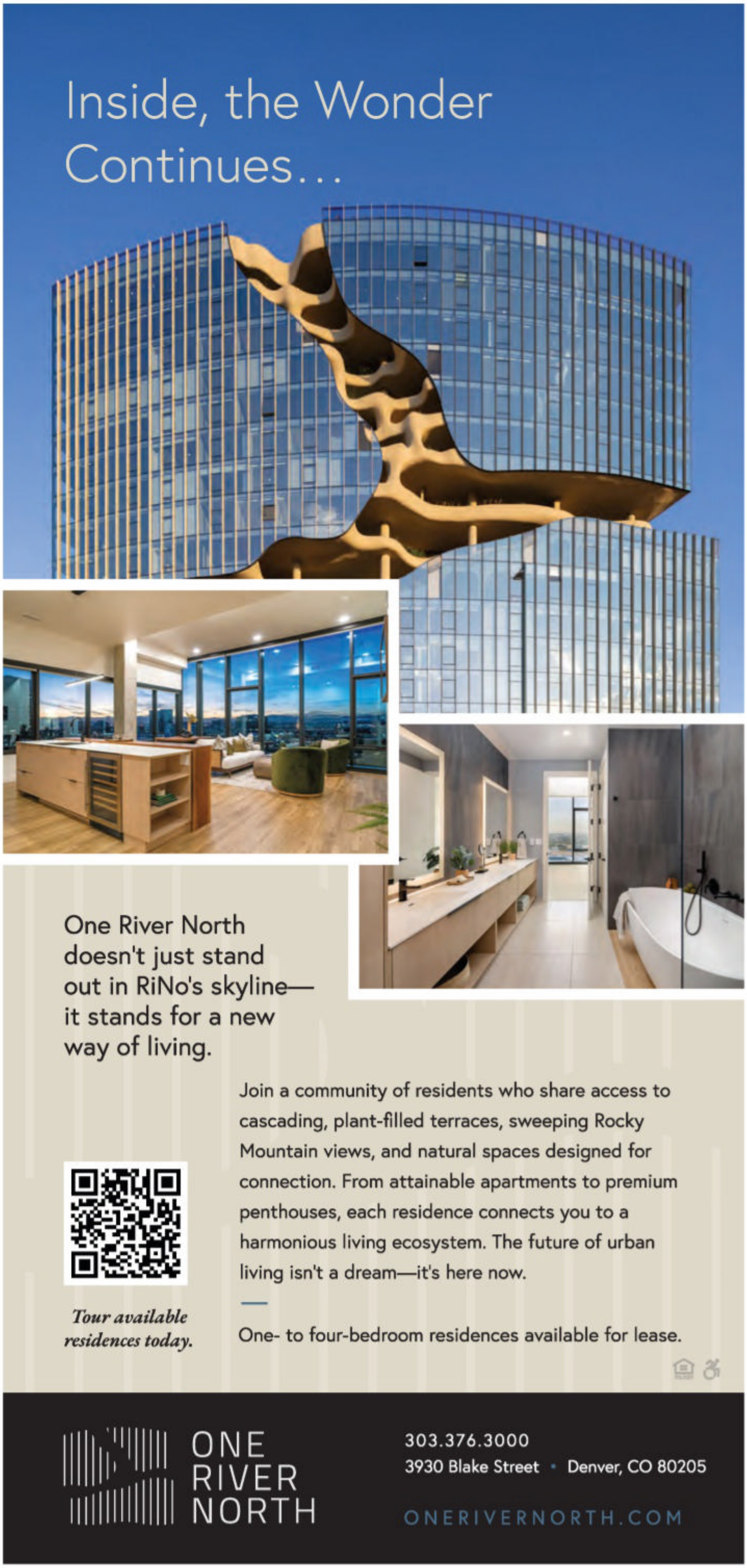
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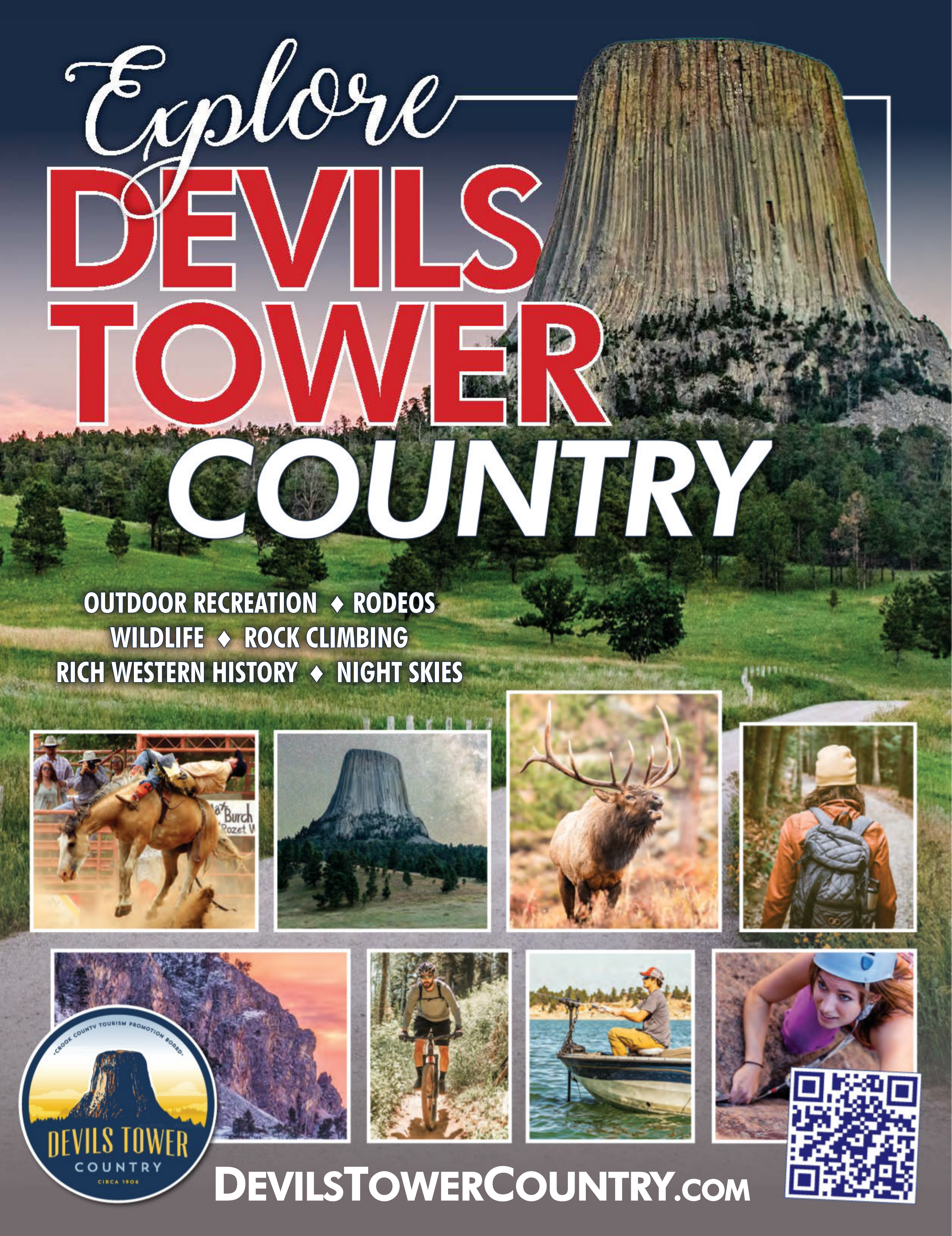
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^ **Olde Town Arvada's mural-bedecked streets are open to pedestrians only.**

Rockin' The Suburbs

For the first three years of our marriage, my husband and I rented a 500-square-foot row house a block off South Broadway. We always joked that we weren't hip enough to live in Baker—we had too few tattoos and lacked an all-consuming passion for pour-over coffee. Still, we felt pretty cool when we hit Atomic Cowboy's late-night pizza window on the way home from a show at the Hi-Dive. I loved walking to Alameda Station and taking the light rail to work downtown. On evening strolls with our husky, we dreamed about buying one of the quirky Victorian homes we passed.

When we started looking at real estate, though, reality set in: If we wanted a yard, a garage, and more than one bathroom, we were going to be priced out of our beloved neighborhood, and maybe the entire city. In 2017, even fixer-uppers were out of reach, as flippers swooped in waving cash and waiving inspections. The market in 2025 isn't all that different, but the alternatives to Denver proper have changed.

As senior editor Michelle Shortall details in "Life On The Edge" (page 60), the Mile High City's suburbs have more appeal than ever, and I can personally speak to life in one of them. Eight years ago, we decamped to Arvada, lured by a corner lot, a manageable mortgage, and, crucially, the then-forthcoming commuter rail to Union Station.

Today, though, we rarely need to venture farther than the mile and a half between our midcentury ranch and Arvada's charming Olde Town Historic District. Stone Cellar Bistro is a date-night destination whose chef recently competed on *Hell's Kitchen*. I get my hair cut at Clementine's Salon, a chic spot whose original location is in LoHi. New Image Brewing makes some of the best hazy IPAs in the state. We just got a Snooze. My husband and I even discovered local rock band Boot Gun on a Second Saturday festival stage in Olde Town—years *before* its first Hi-Dive gig this past January.

I still check out Zillow listings in Baker from time to time, and I like to fantasize about moving into a LoDo high-rise once we're empty nesters. There's an undeniable energy to the city that the 'burbs will never fully replicate. But for now, I'm thankful that some of the things that make Denver such a great place to live have spilled into its borderlands.

JESSICA LaRUSSO
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BARBARA O'NEIL
Associate editor

In "It Takes A Village" (page 34), associate editor Barbara O'Neil cites statistics about how cultural stigmas can make it difficult for new moms to open up about mental health issues, even to their doctors. But she also understands those pressures on a personal level, as she bookended the story—about how Colorado organizations are trying to better support birthing parents—with intimate details about her own recent postpartum struggles. "Once I got to talking with the women I interviewed, I found it easier to share and ultimately write down my experience," O'Neil says. "Ashleigh Leader, a mom I spoke with for this piece, told me it took a lot of courage to share her story, but if it helps just one mom, then she thinks it's worth it. I feel the same way." Although local researchers say things are changing for the better, overcoming the fear of judgment to ask for help remains a hurdle. **"I feel like there's a perception that women who have postpartum mood disorders must not be grateful for their babies, and that's just not true,"** O'Neil says. "I've always wanted to be a mom, planned my pregnancy, and read every baby book I could find—and nothing could have prepared me for what I felt in those first few months. It was such a weird, conflicting mental state to be in. Now that most of that fog is gone, though, I'm experiencing all of the happiness and love I expected."

From top: Sarah Banks (2)

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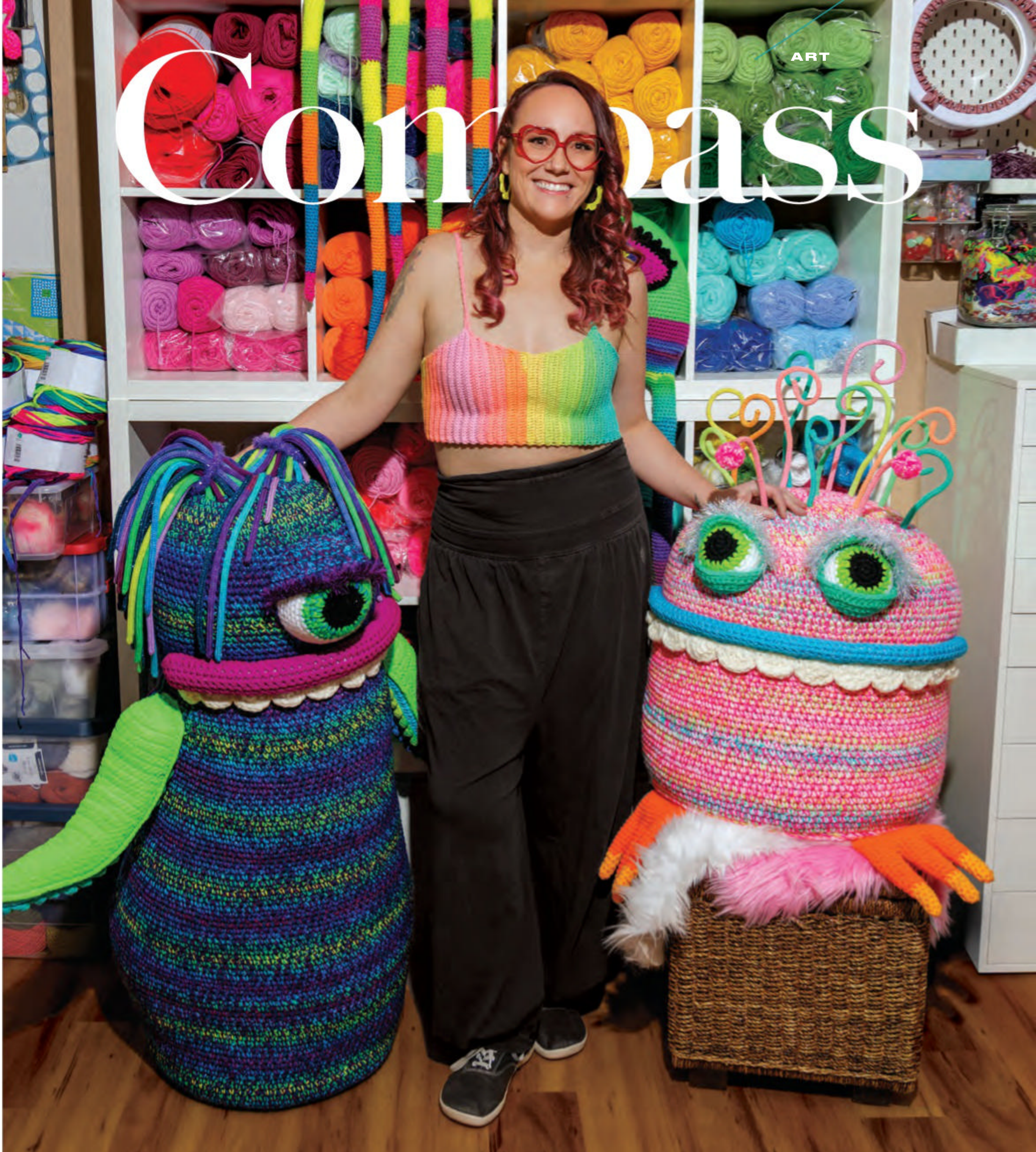


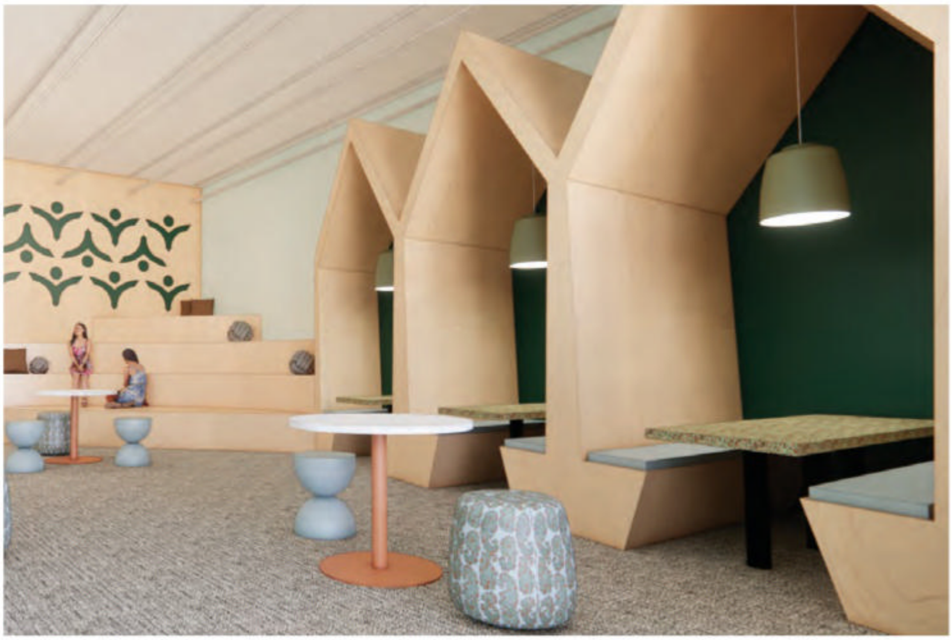
Serious Fun

Sadie Young’s colorful crocheted monsters may look like characters from a children’s television show, but the Denver artist’s creative intent is anything but juvenile. Inspired by Jungian psychology, Young’s fiber art menagerie puts a playful spin on self-criticism. “Our inner monsters tend to be way bigger and easier to find than the positive aspects of ourselves,” Young says. “I’m trying to make it easier to face these negative feelings or fears.” Young unveiled her first large-scale crochet installation in 2020 at Spectra Art Space, the South Broadway gallery and immersive art hub she co-founded nearly a decade prior. “It was so fun to make, and it was such a hit,” she says. This month, Young will debut more than 30 new silly-meets-serious creations at her show *The Tangled Self*, which opens at the Denver Art Museum on May 4. Visitors can scramble inside the gaping mouth of a 12-foot-tall monster named “Manic,” ogle dangling eyeball tubes called “Insecurities,” and encounter tentacled creatures known as “Anxia” and “Tay.” Young spent several months crocheting for 10-plus hours a day and used more than 300 skeins of vibrant yarn to produce the one-of-a-kind beasts. “I hope [this show] makes people realize that we all have this going on in our head,” Young says. “We’re all tangled selves.” –**LAURA BEAUSIRE**

PHOTOGRAPH BY AMANDA LÓPEZ

Come Together

At Social Fabric, Colorado's often-overlooked Asian community finds a home base.



Annie Guo VanDan has spent her entire adulthood spotlighting Colorado's Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) community. In 2006, the now 39-year-old Aurora resident—whose family immigrated to Colorado from Taiwan in 1987—and her mother, Christina Yutai Guo, founded *Asian Avenue Magazine*, a monthly print and online publication covering local topics from restaurant openings to politics. Three years later, the tiny outfit blossomed into the Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network (CACEN), a nonprofit with a mission to encourage cultural exchange through networking events, sports camps for Asian youth, and anti-harassment workshops.

But VanDan's dream of opening a physical space dedicated to her community felt out of reach—until now. Through donations and grants, including $1 million from the Colorado Health Foundation, CACEN was able to purchase a former warehouse near the Centennial Airport—a neighborhood that was imperative to VanDan because it has the highest concentration of Asian residents in the state. This spring, the organization soft-launched Social Fabric, a community hub. "I think about the trajectory of my career," VanDan says, "and it feels like all roads have led to this."

Designed to foster connection, the 7,200-square-foot multipurpose center will act as the group's event headquarters (think: clothing swaps, food festivals, and yoga classes). The building also includes a co-working area, featuring shared desks, private pods, and conference rooms, as well as an exhibition space. (Currently on view: Colorado Asian Pacific United's history of Denver's Chinatown, a large stretch of Denver that was destroyed in an 1880 race riot.) Once CACEN receives additional funding, Kevin Nguyen (who owns Denver's Regular Architecture and designed RiNo's Hop Alley and Beckon, among other chic local restaurants) will dress the interiors with warm wood accents, plush couches, and live plants.

Though many of Social Fabric's amenities appeal to adults, VanDan also envisions it as a haven for youngsters to play Pokémon and celebrate birthdays—the type of hangout she longed for as a teenager growing up on the Front Range. And she hopes the center's open-door policy will help members of an often-disregarded demographic feel at home in Denver. "We're your neighbors—we're in your school, your workplace," VanDan says. "But a lot of times we don't feel visible in Colorado. So this is a space for us to be seen and to shine."

—PATRICIA KAOWTHUMRONG

^ *From top:* **Renderings of Social Fabric's anticipated build-out; Annie Guo VanDan**

From top: Courtesy of Regular Architecture (3); Courtesy of Colorado Asian Culture and Education Network

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COMMON THREADS

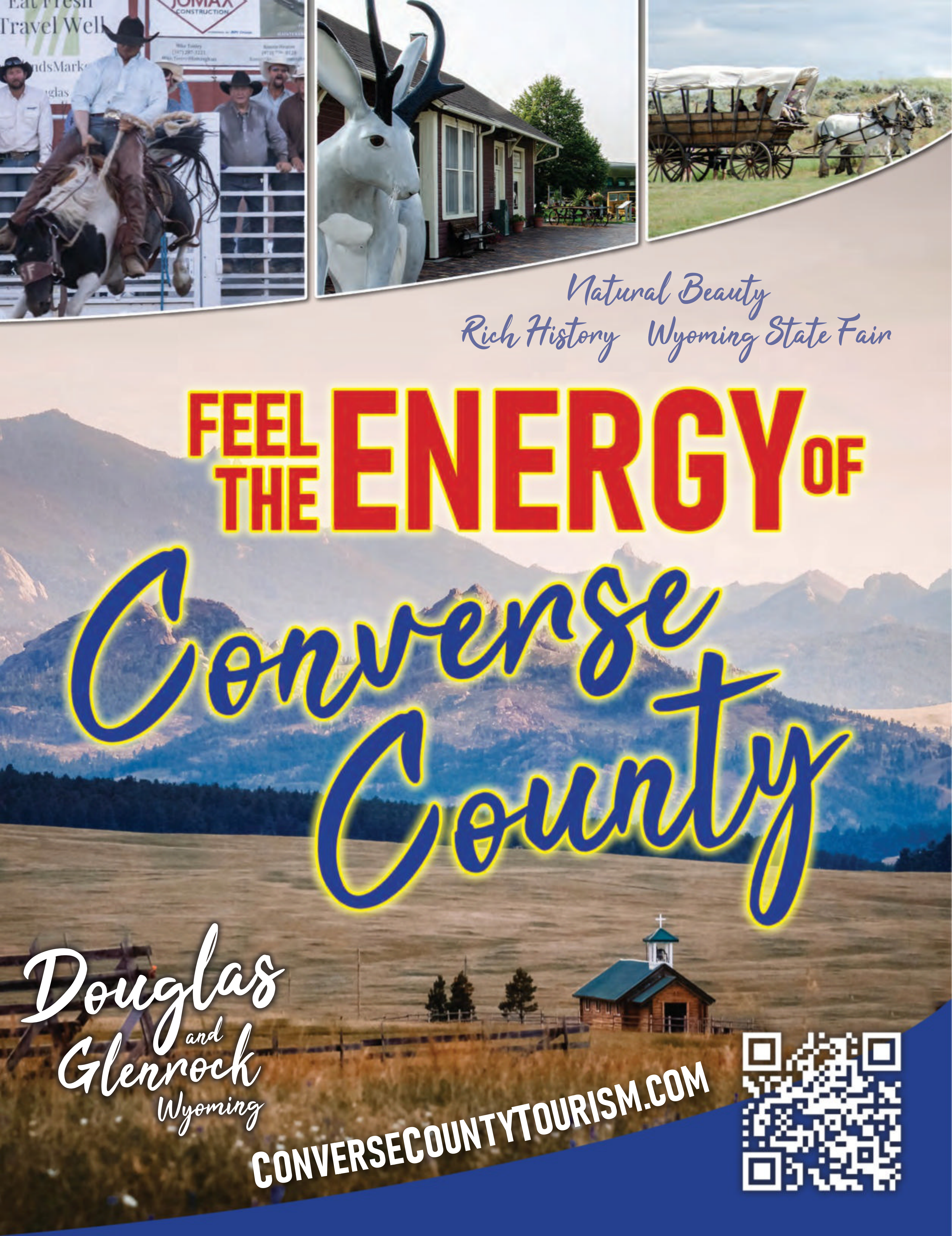
Four ways Social Fabric weaves together a range of interests.

FOR FOODIES
The on-site cafe hosts rotating, primarily Asian-owned food and drink vendors. Stop by now for a black sesame latte and a sando from Onto Coffee.

FOR FITNESS FANATICS
Thanks to a $10,000 grant, Social Fabric purchased three stationary bikes that each generate 100 watts of clean energy for the building per hourlong workout.

FOR CEOS
Social Fabric boasts six dedicated office spaces for health care practitioners, nonprofits, clubs, and businesses looking for permanent HQs.

FOR BOOKWORMS
At the center's library, bibliophiles can check out more than 200 donated novels, cookbooks, and other literature by AANHPI authors.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Splash Pad

The BolderBoulder 10K is the epitome of a fun run. Nearly 50,000 participants (many in costume) weave through neighborhood streets, passing hula dancers, an Elvis impersonator, and bacon handouts along the way. But the Cedar Avenue slip-and-slide might be the route's most anticipated attraction. If you participate in the 45th edition of the race this Memorial Day, don't forget to splash on the lawn of Cathy and Bryan Fluegel, who have rolled out the wet carpet in their front yard for nearly 20 years. –ROBERT SANCHEZ

Cathy Fluegel: Over on 19th Street, around 2006, there was a house where people were running up a driveway and sliding down this little grassy spot where the homeowner put out a sprinkler. I went home and told Bryan, "Let's put out our slip-and-slide." So many people came over that the slide got destroyed in 10 minutes.

Bryan Fluegel: It became so popular, so fast. People were just lining up.

Cathy: We used a pool liner after that. Now we use roofing plastic with a carpet-pad barrier underneath.

Bryan: And we have PVC pipes on either side.

Cathy: [*To Bryan*] You're going to give away trade secrets. We can't give away our engineering designs to *5280*.

Bryan: But it lasts. I'll walk up the street and see this big line of people waiting, all for just a couple of seconds on the slide. It's surreal. We have people in our yard we don't know. Cathy and I have walked into our house and there were strangers using our bathroom.

Cathy: That's when we asked BolderBoulder to bring us four portable toilets. We probably could use 10 of them.

Bryan: We hear about it from strangers all the time. I was at an out-of-state business meeting, and I was talking to some random person. The guy said he hit the slide the last time he ran the BolderBoulder.

Cathy: We had someone ask, "Do you know the slip-and-slide house?" And we're like, "Bitch, we *are* the slip-and-slide house." Our party runs itself. Everyone loves Bryan's playlist. We see our friends from when we were growing up, and those people bring their kids.... I've never slid on it. I think I have performance anxiety. In my mind, I'd do this beautiful baseball slide, but I don't know how to do that.

Bryan: We critique people.

Cathy: There are people who fail really badly. We see belly flops, or the guys who hit the ground and just don't slide.

Bryan: At the end of the day, all that water gets pushed to the end and it turns into a big mud pit.

Cathy: Some years, we've resodded sections of the lawn. Other times, the grass comes back after a few weeks.

Bryan: It's like a cost-benefit analysis. We're giving something to the community. It's only a couple hundred bucks for us, so who cares?

Cathy: Everyone feels good. Everyone's happy to be here. We feel so humbled that people want to be around us. This is what the idea of community is all about.

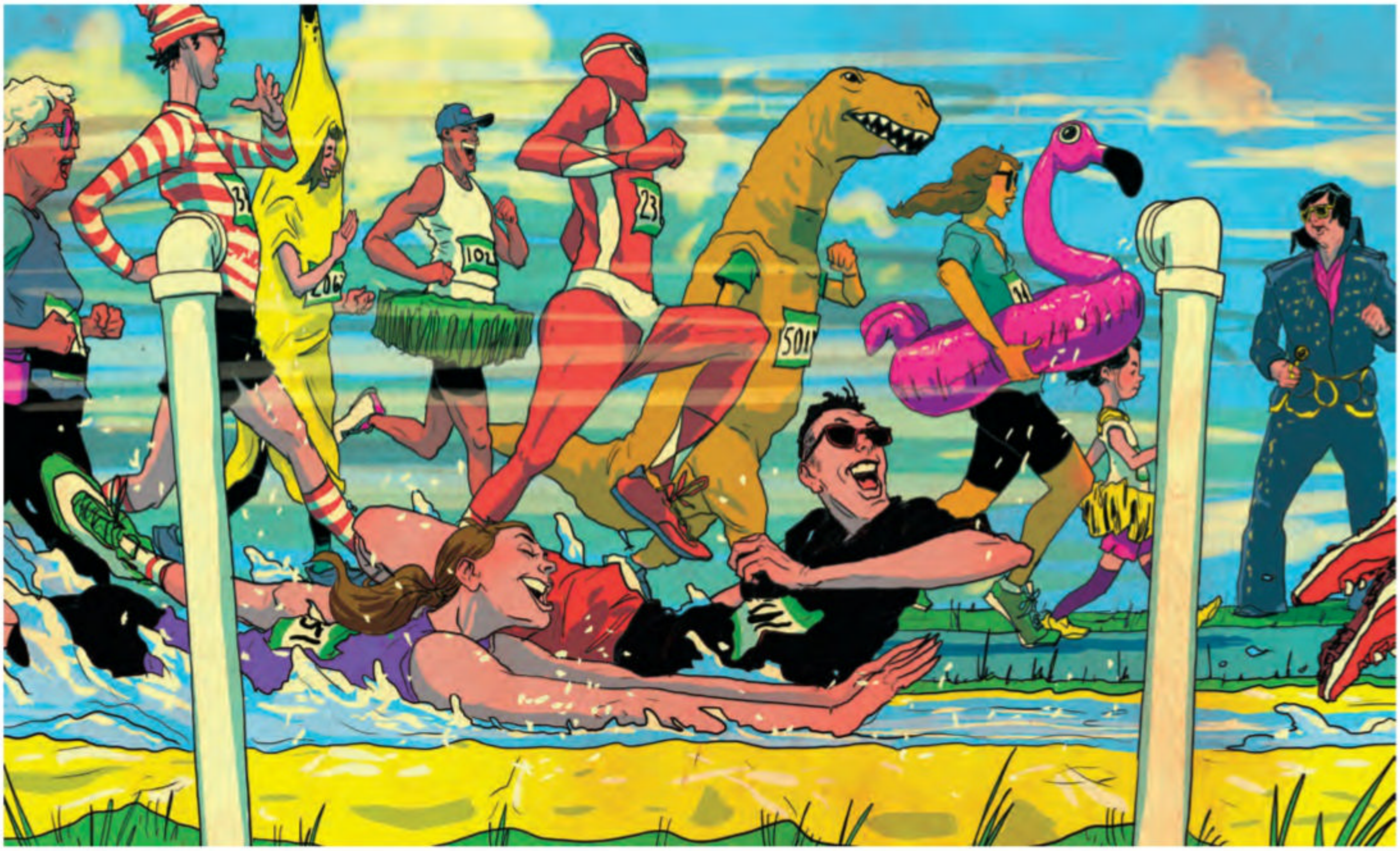

ILLUSTRATION BY MICHAEL BYERS

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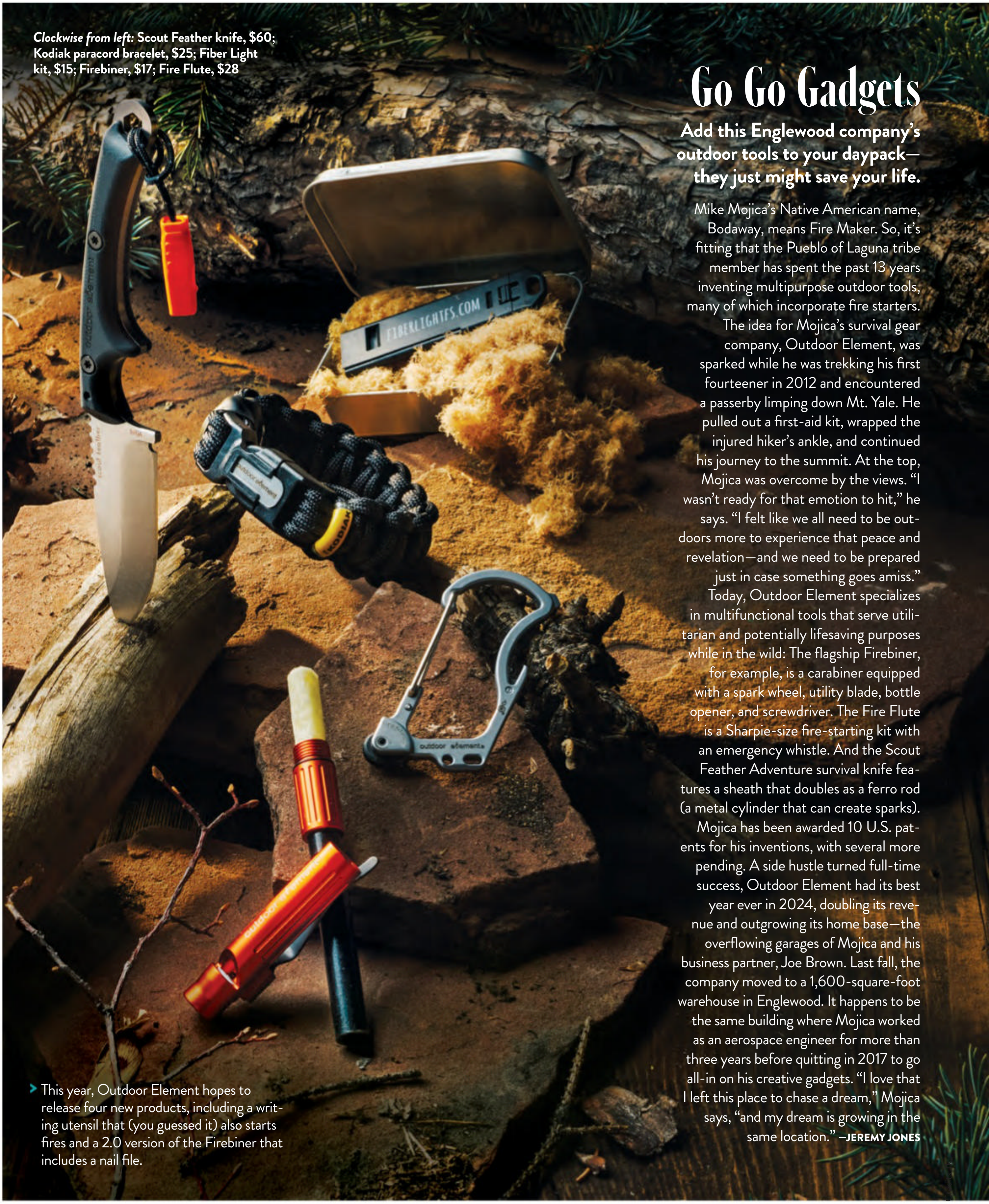
Go Go Gadgets

Add this Englewood company's outdoor tools to your daypack—they just might save your life.

Mike Mojica's Native American name, Bodaway, means Fire Maker. So, it's fitting that the Pueblo of Laguna tribe member has spent the past 13 years inventing multipurpose outdoor tools, many of which incorporate fire starters. The idea for Mojica's survival gear company, Outdoor Element, was sparked while he was trekking his first fourteener in 2012 and encountered a passerby limping down Mt. Yale. He pulled out a first-aid kit, wrapped the injured hiker's ankle, and continued his journey to the summit. At the top, Mojica was overcome by the views. "I wasn't ready for that emotion to hit," he says. "I felt like we all need to be outdoors more to experience that peace and revelation—and we need to be prepared just in case something goes amiss." Today, Outdoor Element specializes in multifunctional tools that serve utilitarian and potentially lifesaving purposes while in the wild: The flagship Firebiner, for example, is a carabiner equipped with a spark wheel, utility blade, bottle opener, and screwdriver. The Fire Flute is a Sharpie-size fire-starting kit with an emergency whistle. And the Scout Feather Adventure survival knife features a sheath that doubles as a ferro rod (a metal cylinder that can create sparks). Mojica has been awarded 10 U.S. patents for his inventions, with several more pending. A side hustle turned full-time success, Outdoor Element had its best year ever in 2024, doubling its revenue and outgrowing its home base—the overflowing garages of Mojica and his business partner, Joe Brown. Last fall, the company moved to a 1,600-square-foot warehouse in Englewood. It happens to be the same building where Mojica worked as an aerospace engineer for more than three years before quitting in 2017 to go all-in on his creative gadgets. "I love that I left this place to chase a dream," Mojica says, "and my dream is growing in the same location." —**JEREMY JONES**



Clockwise from left: **Scout Feather knife, $60; Kodiak paracord bracelet, $25; Fiber Light kit, $15; Firebiner, $17; Fire Flute, $28**

› This year, Outdoor Element hopes to release four new products, including a writing utensil that (you guessed it) also starts fires and a 2.0 version of the Firebiner that includes a nail file.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PAUL MILLER / STYLING BY CHARLI ORNETT

More Than a Neighborhood

The Village at Castle Pines is more than a gated neighborhood. It's a lifestyle community with two world-class golf courses, three pools, miles of trails, plus multiple tennis and pickleball courts. It's surrounded by open space, wildlife, and spectacular mountain views. On-site, staffed security gate and emergency services provides privacy and peace of mind.

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Small But Mighty

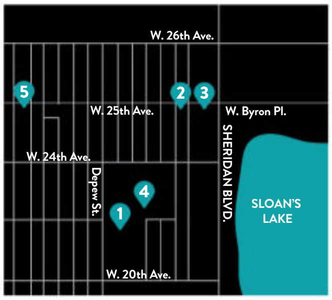
Clocking in at one square mile and a population of 5,400, Edgewater bills itself as a little town next to the big city. But thanks to these new and improved cafes, recreation spots, and shops, Denver's neighbor to the west has become a destination in its own right. –KELSEY LINDSEY

From top: Landfall Floral Co.; a bath station at Good Boy Jack's

1 Landfall Floral Co.

5505 W. 20TH AVE.

Last September, Emily Guin moved her floral design shop from a small kiosk in Union Station to a bigger storefront inside Edgewater Public Market. Customers can grab a bespoke bouquet (ranging from $35 to $145); create their own centerpieces at the stem bar (starting at $2 per stem), which stocks local blooms in the summer; and browse an assortment of aesthetically pleasing gifts, from specialty pantry goods to adorable baby toys to relaxing bath salts.



2 Lot 46 Music Bar

5302 W. 25TH AVE.

Regulars of neighborhood mainstay Edgewater Inn Pizza don't have to go far to enjoy a side of live entertainment with their hand-tossed pie. In 2023, Niya Gingerich, the former owner of now-shuttered Tennyson watering hole Local 46, purchased the pizzeria and transformed its back patio into Lot 46, a music venue and beer garden that hosts local bands, DJ'd dance parties, Thursday night karaoke, and open jam sessions. For its own crop of newfound fans, Lot 46 offers three VIP membership tiers (starting at $700 a year) that come with food and drink discounts, branded swag, and credits toward private parties.

3 Sati Coffee Co

5224 W. 25TH AVE.

Folks who lined up to sip Sati's naturally flavored cold brews at the Highlands Square farmers' market on summer Sundays can now enjoy the brand's buzz year-round. Steps from Sloan's Lake, seven-year-old Sati's new brick-and-mortar has four nitro taps that rotate 12 subtly sweet seasonal flavors—from pumpkin pie to honey lavender—of java made from beans roasted in-house. Grab a few cold brew cans ($5 each) for your next camping trip or order a five-gallon keg ($125) for the office. Sati also pours drip coffees and espressos, should an oat milk latte be your drink of choice.

4 Citizens Park

5401 W. 22ND AVE.

If joining the swarms of cyclists and speed walkers that flock to Sloan's Lake Park on a sunny day sounds hectic, this six-acre green space just west of Sheridan Boulevard is a quiet alternative. This past June, Edgewater completed the first phase of its $2.5 million renovation, sprucing up the softball field and installing a paved plaza at the north entrance. As more funding rolls in, the city plans to add fitness stations, an outdoor classroom, and new playground equipment. Visitors can take advantage of the updated amenities during free pop-up concerts in the park, which bring local artists and food trucks to the existing pavilion each summer.

5 Good Boy Jack's

5846 W. 25TH AVE.

This six-month-old pet store stocks upscale products, such as locally made biscuits from AJ's Dog Bakery and dapper collars and bow ties, for discerning four-legged friends. Rinse off dirty paws in the shop's two self-wash dog bath stations ($25), which feature Fido's choice of shampoo and conditioner, lick mats to relieve anxiety, and a fetching robe to dry off in. Extroverted pooches can mingle during in-store events (prices vary), including puppy yoga, socialization classes, and themed holiday parties. For shy pets, owner Jordan Schmitz will close the store for a private shopping experience, no extra charge.

From top: Clancey Woodlee/Courtesy of Landfall Floral Co.; Courtesy of Michael Heller

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Charm To Table

Like many restaurateurs, Eric Skokan, who opened Black Cat Bistro in 2006 and Bramble & Hare in 2012, installed private dining huts during the pandemic. But instead of erecting them on the Boulder eateries' sidewalks, Skokan built shelters on his Black Cat Farmstead, 12 miles north. Five years and a mountain of paperwork later, he's made the temporary setup a permanent attraction. Several cozy cabanas now welcome groups of up to 12 guests every Wednesday through Saturday, year-round. The food, nearly all of it grown on Skokan's 425 acres, comes out of a modern kitchen built into a 140-year-old former blacksmith's shop. Each week, the chef and his staff create a new, fixed multicourse menu ($155 per person) featuring the likes of fresh or preserved tomatoes, tender gai lan, heirloom grains, and the farm's lamb, pork, and chicken. Your server will tell the origin story of each ingredient, whether olive oil pressed by Skokan on a trip to Italy or Japanese herbs grown within fork's reach. Stoke the potbelly stove if things get chilly or throw open the doors on the hottest days and toast—with whiskey-fortified cider in vintage teacups or dewy apéritifs—to this little miracle the Black Cat team creates come rain, snow, or sunshine. —**MARK ANTONATION**

PHOTOGRAPH BY JONI SCHRANTZ

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ODIE B'S

Happy Place

Odie B's brings rowdy flavor to its new northeast Denver outpost. –AMANDA M. FAISON

^ *From left:* The Dirty Denver, mixed bag of fries, chopped cheese sandwich, and house pickles

Odie B's is more than just a sandwich shop; it's a highly caloric, deeply satisfying, dopamine-producing vibe. The concept—both the smallish OG in Sunnyside and the brand-new, more spacious spinoff—is nothing short of a joy machine.

When Cliff and Cara Blauvelt opened the first restaurant in 2022, they named it Bodega (despite lacking the convenience-store shelves of its typical East Coast namesake). But after two years of crushing it with a packed dining room every day, they received a cease-and-desist letter from a Kansas City restaurant named La Bodega, so they quickly swapped in signage and printed materials with the new moniker. Honestly, Odie B's fits all the better. Cara says Cliff chose the name because "it's kinda hip-hop cool"—just like the couple's restaurants.

You can hear the music thumping even before you enter the new spot on the border between the Cole and Elyria-Swansea neighborhoods: Wu-Tang, Nelly, Keith Sweat, MF Doom. Order at the counter over the window-rattling beat (don't worry—in my three visits, the staff has yet to misunderstand me); take your table card, emblazoned with '80s and '90s icons (Trapper Keeper, Carlton Banks from *The Fresh Prince of Bel Air*) to a seat; and wait. Everyone—from guests to staff—is smiling big. There's true hospitality here, delivered casually and warmly.

That comes straight from the Blauvelts. "In a world where hospitality is kind of dying, if we can blow people away at our little sandwich shop, that's something," Cara says.

There's an intentionality to Odie B's paved by six years of sobriety for the owners. The two met at Steuben's, when Cliff was cooking and Cara was hosting. Years passed before their paths crossed again, but after reconnecting, they got sober together,

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19:30
FISHER & PAYKEL
FISHER & PAYKEL

opened the Sunnyside eatery, and got married a month later. (Cara jokes that her wedding diet was the Hustler, Odie B's breakfast burrito jacked with chorizo, scrambled egg, roasted green chiles, tots, cheddar jack, and habanero crema.) Unsurprisingly, the menu's nonalcoholic drinks stand out, especially the carrot-ginger-lemon juice served shaken, with the flair of a cocktail.

"Cliff doesn't put anything on the menu that isn't better than everything else out there; it has to have its own meaning and value," Cara says. Take the Boujee, a breakfast sandwich with scrambled egg, whipped herby cheese spread, house greens, muhammara, and za'atar on pillowy City Bakery focaccia. Even without adding bacon, pork belly, or Impossible sausage (Odie B's highly indulgent menu lists a plant-based option for nearly 80 percent of its items), this sando remakes the category. You'll crave it in the morning and in the afternoon, and at the new location, you can also order it in the evening.

Here's the other thing: Odie B's portions are massive, so you can split a dish and the cost (that $13 breakfast sammie is now only $6.50). Same goes for the towering $16 chicken biscuit, which—with a fried chicken thigh, apricot honey butter spiked with Calabrian chile, and a runny egg all loaded onto a smoked cheddar and chive buttermilk biscuit—makes every other biscuit sandwich look like an amuse-bouche.

And then you have the chopped cheese ($16). The overstuffed hoagie is a take on the New York bodega classic—like a cheeseburger with all the fixings chopped on the flattop so everything gets cooked and crispy. At Odie B's, it gets an upgrade with house-made breakfast sausage instead of ground beef, dill-pickled onions, pickled fresno chiles, and American cheese. The whole mess is minced and hashed before being slid onto a toasted roll, slathered with green-chile-based "fancy sauce," and topped with shredded iceberg lettuce. It's all a sandwich should be—decadent, gooey, satisfying, multitextured—especially with the finishing shake of everything seasoning for seedy, garlicky crunch.

^ **Odie B's co-owners Cliff and Cara Blauvelt**

More than sandwiches populate the Odie B's universe. There's the don't-miss bag of mixed fries (thin-cut, waffle, wedge, and sweet potato, all together) showered with nutritional yeast and a proprietary seasoning blend called Bodega Dust. For something lighter, try the Damn Good Salad, which would have indeed been damn good if I hadn't added the way-too-salty falafel (one of two $5 upgrades on offer; the other is fried chicken) to the crunchy pile of greens, roasted nuts, fennel, radish, carrot, and pickled apricot and red onion. Let me tell you, I will be asking for the recipe for the pistachio vinaigrette until the day I die. As for the falafel? I pushed them to the side and forgot all about them.

Honestly, that's the only negative I can conjure up about Odie B's. And the best positive (of many) I can say is this: Of the thousands of restaurants I've dined at over the years, I can't think of another place where, from the second I walked through the door, I felt like I wasn't just a customer. I was a part of something.

ODIE B'S

2651 W. 38th Ave.;
1350 40th St., Suite 180
odie-bs.com

The Draw: Over-the-top-but-hits-the-mark sandwiches; plant-based options

The Drawback: For some, the music may be too loud; falafel is overly salty

Noise Level: Loud

Don't Miss: The Boujee breakfast sandwich; chopped cheese sandwich; mixed bag of fries; the Hustler breakfast burrito; chicken biscuit; carrot-ginger-lemon OD blast

YOU ARE WHAT YOU READ

In keeping with Odie B's commitment to building community around food, the Blauvelts display their extensive cookbook collection (ranging from *A Super Upsetting Cookbook About Sandwiches to Smoke & Pickles*) at their restaurants. Prompted by a customer we overheard commenting, "Cool books, but I wonder if they really look at them," we decided to ask. These are Cliff's favorites. –AMF

"If you're ever stuck on a particular dish and looking for that extra oomph, hit ***The Flavor Bible*** (2008) by Andrew Dornenburg and Karen Page. It's an absolute must-have for any cook, professional or at home. I gift this book the most because it's just so damn useful."

"Anything from Matty Matheson [yes, *The Bear* actor really is a chef and a cookbook author], but ***Soups, Salads, Sandwiches*** (2024) is a baller book. I'm not sure there is a more fun chef and cookbook combo out there."

"***Max's Sandwich Book*** (2018) by Max Halley is truly the ultimate guide to creating perfection between two slices of bread."

"Michael Ruhlman's ***Ratio*** (2009) is a technique-driven book that creates a solid base for your dishes."

"***The Food Lab*** (2015) by J. Kenji Lopez-Alt is a technical cookbook that will keep you in the know and turning the pages."

TURKEY AND THE WOLF
MAX'S WORLD OF SANDWICHES
THE FLAVOR BIBLE
MATTY MATHESON
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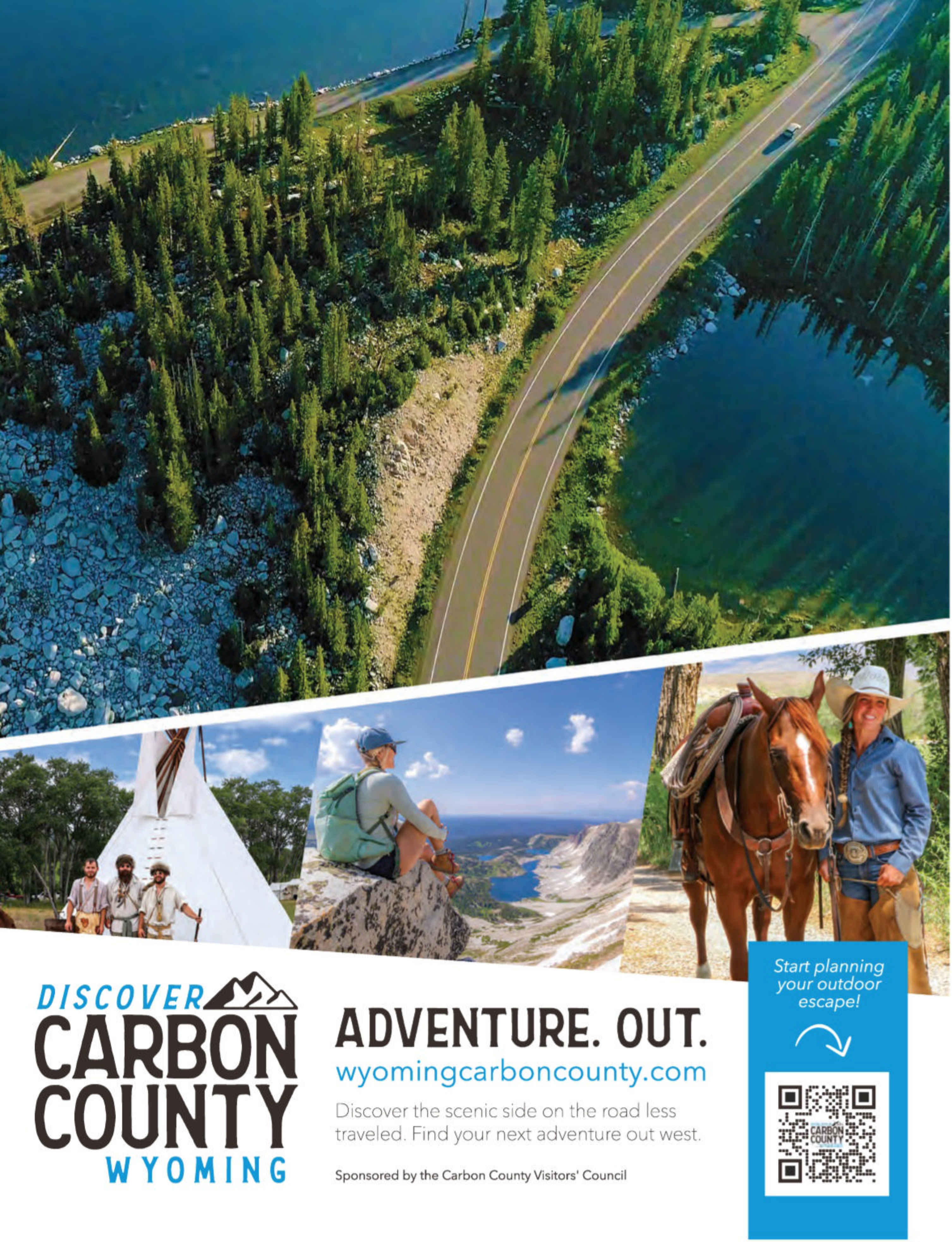

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It Takes A Village

In the past decade, the rate of postpartum mood disorders has doubled nationwide. Here in Colorado, local organizations are rushing to help.

BY BARBARA O'NEIL

People tell you all kinds of things when you're pregnant. One comment I heard most often during my pregnancy last year? *You'll never feel love quite like holding your baby for the first time.* So when I finally gave birth, I prepared myself for an overwhelming rush of emotions, only to feel something I never expected—indifference.

Over the next few weeks, I forced myself to admire my baby. I studied her little fingers and toes, knowing that one day they wouldn't be so small. But she remained a stranger to me, one who didn't do much other than eat, sleep, and cry. One day, I finally spoke aloud to my husband the guilt-laden words that had been simmering in my mind: "I don't feel like I love her like I'm supposed to."

It was early July 2024. Outside my window, squirrels scampered up bright green trees, birds landed on my balcony, and my apartment's AC struggled to beat back the blazing heat. Summer in Colorado was warm and colorful, but the inside of my home had never felt so gloomy. I spent my days pacing the living room, rocking my baby who couldn't be soothed. Recovering from the physical pain of delivery took longer than I expected, and rolling out of bed in the morning was excruciating.

As my husband and I took shifts caring for our newborn at night, each getting maybe four hours of shut-eye, sleep deprivation crept in. In the early hours of the night, I hallucinated shadows in the hallway. When I did sleep, I'd jolt awake in a panic thinking I had dropped my baby on the floor, only to find her sleeping peacefully in her bassinet. Friends stopped checking in after too many declined coffee dates. When my mom would come over to help, she'd often find me sitting in the same spot on my faded orange couch, my face tear-streaked. One day, I thought to myself, *Having a baby was the worst mistake of my life.*

IN JUNE 2023, a Boulder woman drove her two-month-old baby to a hospital parking lot where she killed him before attempting to take her own life. In an affidavit, she told police she had been experiencing various postpartum mental health conditions on top of extreme sleep deprivation, and she did not want her baby to suffer like she had. Although she had made appointments to see a therapist, she missed them. This past August, she accepted a plea deal and was sentenced to 40 years in prison for the crime.

Such horrific, headline-making stories may be rare, but in Colorado, the leading cause of pregnancy- and postpartum-related deaths is suicide—and the mental

ILLUSTRATION BY HOLLY STAPLETON

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Photographed at the Denver Art Museum.

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illnesses that can lead to that devastating outcome are far from uncommon. A November 2024 study published in *JAMA Network Open* found that nationwide, the rate of postpartum depression (PPD) doubled from 2010 to 2021. According to research from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in eight new mothers experience PPD, and one in five experience postpartum anxiety (PPA) or substance use disorder. Other research suggests that up to 50 percent of all PPD and PPA cases remain undiagnosed, largely due to stigmas that compel patients to stay silent.

Those statistics are why Hyeyoung Oh Nelson, a professor of health and behavioral sciences at the University of Colorado Denver, has recently shifted the focus of her career to studying mental health in the perinatal stage (which consists of pregnancy and the postpartum period). In a 2024 study she published in *Social Science & Medicine*, Oh Nelson found that isolation during the postpartum period—which in her research is defined as up to five years after birth—can increase one's risk for mental health disorders. "We go from these highly medicalized systems where you have regular points of contact with your provider, especially toward the end of your pregnancy, and then you have a baby and you're just sent away and demedicalized completely," Oh Nelson says. "And that isolation is combined with physical recovery and learning to care for this newborn."

If you or someone you know is experiencing a crisis, call 1-844-493-TALK (8255) or visit coloradocrisisservices.org.

But the fact that rates of postpartum mood disorders have been rising is actually a positive sign, according to Dr. Sarah Nagle-Yang, deputy executive director of Colorado Women's Behavioral Health and Wellness at the University of Colorado School of Medicine—because it means more people are being diagnosed. In 2015, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommended at least one routine depression screening for all postpartum patients, which is now offered at new parents' six-week checkup. Since then, many pediatricians have also started offering questionnaires at well-child visits, which happen frequently during babies' first six months of life. However, nearly 40 percent of birthing parents skip the six-week postpartum visit with their OB-GYN, and historical health care inequities may keep them from being honest when they are handed screening forms.

Through her research, Oh Nelson learned that women of color were especially hesitant to report their true feelings on postpartum screening questionnaires out of fear of child protective services getting involved. "I remember even for me," says Oh Nelson, who has two children, "it was just one more piece of paper you have to fill out quickly before you see your pediatrician." Instead, Oh Nelson is advocating for completely rethinking the perinatal mental health system. She'd like to see new parents receive in-person check-ins with doctors trained in identifying mental health disorders. "This 'village' that we hear so much about doesn't really exist," she says. "If you can afford a postpartum doula and a lactation consultant and mental health assistance, then that's great. But many people can't."

ASHLEIGH LEADER THINKS her postpartum mood disorder started a few weeks after she gave birth to her daughter in late 2023. Following a difficult journey trying to conceive, the 41-year-old Douglas County resident had PPROM (preterm premature rupture of membranes), the medical term for when a patient's water breaks early. After pushing for six hours, Leader underwent an emergency C-section at just 33 weeks pregnant. Her five-pound, 10-ounce baby stayed in the neonatal intensive care unit for over three weeks. "I struggled to establish my milk supply. I wasn't able to hold my baby a lot of the time," Leader says. "And anytime I could hold her, I had to navigate 50 different cords and make sure that I wasn't strangling her or ripping her oxygen off."

Over the next couple of months, Leader experienced sleep deprivation beyond what you would normally expect when caring for a newborn. Her premature baby had come home on an oxygen machine, which made Leader anxious. Every night, she'd lie awake listening to the machine and her daughter's grunts, anxiously Googling her concerns into the early hours of the morning. As her mental state declined, her obstetrician tried to prescribe medication to help her anxiety, but Leader found she was unable to take the usual pills due to her medical history. She found a psychiatrist, but the next available appointment was at least six weeks away. "My brain finally started to tell me, 'You should just kill yourself,' " Leader says.

Desperate for help, Leader visited her local emergency room, thinking that she would be able to chat with an on-call psychiatrist, find a medication that would work for her, and go home. Instead, the doctor placed her on a 72-hour psychiatric hold, during which a patient is involuntarily sent to a mental health facility, given a hospital gown and a simple bed, and continuously monitored for three days. "There's no way to get out of a 72-hour hold,

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even though I was being separated from my baby and trying to establish a milk supply," Leader says. "It made everything a billion times worse."

Leader finally found relief and community in a postpartum support group for new mothers called YANA (You Are Not Alone). The Centennial-based nonprofit offers one-on-one mentorship, group sessions, and a weekly podcast to Colorado moms, all free. Nikki Brooker founded the eight-year-old organization in the wake of another tragedy: In 2016, a Douglas County woman drove her two children to a Sports Authority parking lot, where she killed them before dying by suicide. At the time, Brooker was a teacher at the elementary school one of the children had attended. "A sixth-grade boy came in sobbing," Brooker says. "As I walked him to the counseling center, he looked at me and said, 'How do I know my mom's not going to kill me tonight?' That changed me." When Brooker spoke with the woman's husband months later, he told her he felt that his late wife never recovered from her postpartum mood disorders, even though years had passed since she gave birth.

That conversation led Brooker to research postpartum care worldwide. She began noticing a simple correlation between countries with lower rates of maternal mood disorders and more supportive postpartum health care practices. The Netherlands, for instance, assigns every new mother a midwife to offer her up to 80 hours of postnatal support spread over eight days after birth, all covered by the country's basic health insurance plans. There, rates of postpartum depression are nearly half what they are in the United States. "After I had my first two babies, I realized that having no friends or family with kids of their own is freaking hard," Brooker says. "I started joining and creating mom groups and realized, *Oh, this is what mothering should be like*. Mothering used to be a team sport, and now it's individual. We need to change that."

> "Mothering used to be a team sport, and now it's individual."

In March 2024, the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus launched the Healthy Expectations Perinatal Intensive Outpatient program, the first program of its kind focused on maternal mood disorders in the state. There, groups of women learn skills to cope with depression and anxiety, gain confidence in parenting, and engage in wellness classes (like yoga and art therapy). The eight-week program is held on the CU Anschutz Medical Campus for three hours, three days a week. Crucially, it allows mothers to bring their babies: An early childhood educator and other staff take care of infants from newborns up to a year old in a playroom adjacent to the moms' group therapy room.

"Group therapy and growing in confidence as a new parent are important components of treatment," says the CU School of Medicine's Nagle-Yang, who oversees the program. "When a patient is receiving hospital-based inpatient services, they're separated from their baby. Here, patients receive an intensive level of care without sacrificing that connection."

Thanks to a state Medicaid expansion in 2022 that increased postpartum mental health care coverage for birthing parents from six weeks to a year after delivery, more Coloradans may now be able to pay for programs like Healthy Expectations. Brown University researchers found that similar expansions led to a 20 percent increase in patients accessing mental health care. And as of January, state

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Medicaid covers postpartum care for all people, regardless of their immigration status.

Still, freshly postpartum Coloradans are unlikely to seek out resources on their own, especially as they're learning how to care for a newborn. The Colorado Perinatal Mental Health Project (CO PMHP), a nonprofit and the state's chapter of Postpartum Support International, is working to bridge that gap. Last year, Caring for Denver Foundation gave CO PMHP a grant to launch the Birth Squad, which consists of in-person and remote support groups that are open to anyone in need but include affinity groups for Black and Latina moms. While the Birth Squad currently cares only for Denver-area parents, CO PMHP hopes to expand its coverage throughout the state this year.

CO PMHP's mission is personal for its co-founders and co-executive directors, Kristin Aaker and Patrece Hairston Peetz. Before starting the nonprofit, Hairston Peetz experienced postpartum mood disorders herself and had a difficult time getting care, despite being a child psychologist. "I was a provider and had access to resources and lots of support but still really struggled to find spaces where I could find help," she says. "It was through whispers in the drop-off line and at the park where you would have those conversations."

I SHARED SOME of my own postpartum struggles with Ashleigh Leader, who recommended I read *Mother Brain: How Neuroscience is Rewriting the Story of Parenthood.* Penned by health journalist Chelsea Conaboy, the 2022 book examines how parents' brains physically change after having a child. I paused when I got to chapter three, where Conaboy wrote that 40 percent of first-time mothers reported feeling indifference after birth, just like I had. "The feeling of affection came for those mothers, as it does for most birthing parents, with just a bit of time," she wrote.

Getting involved with YANA dramatically helped Leader, and ultimately, her mental state improved hour by hour, day by day, week by week. But all the support groups, therapy services, and medications in the world might not be enough, says CU Denver's Oh Nelson, if we keep expecting new parents to find help for themselves while at the same time juggling a newborn, financial stressors, and other family and social obligations. "I don't think pharmaceuticals are necessarily the answer here if we can't even get birthing parents properly screened," Oh Nelson says. "We would need a total overhaul of the system where a medical professional visits patients' homes."

Although I was reluctant to attend my own six-week postpartum appointment, I was fortunate to have a physician who took my concerns seriously before my mental state deteriorated further. When I teared up in my obstetrician's exam room and admitted I was mentally and emotionally struggling, my doctor prescribed Zoloft, a medication commonly given to new parents experiencing postpartum mood disorders. She also recommended I speak with the office's mental health counselor.

Together, those solutions bought me the time *I* needed to get better, and over the past year, I've watched my daughter transform from a fragile, colicky newborn into a silly baby who has learned how to play with toys, sit and roll, and laugh. My confidence in caring for her blossomed, and I started reaching out to my friends again. As I watched this new human grow and change, it made me realize that I was a new person, too. And maybe that's OK. ▲▲

Barbara O'Neil is *5280*'s associate editor. Her daughter's latest trick is saying "Mama." Send feedback to letters@5280.com.

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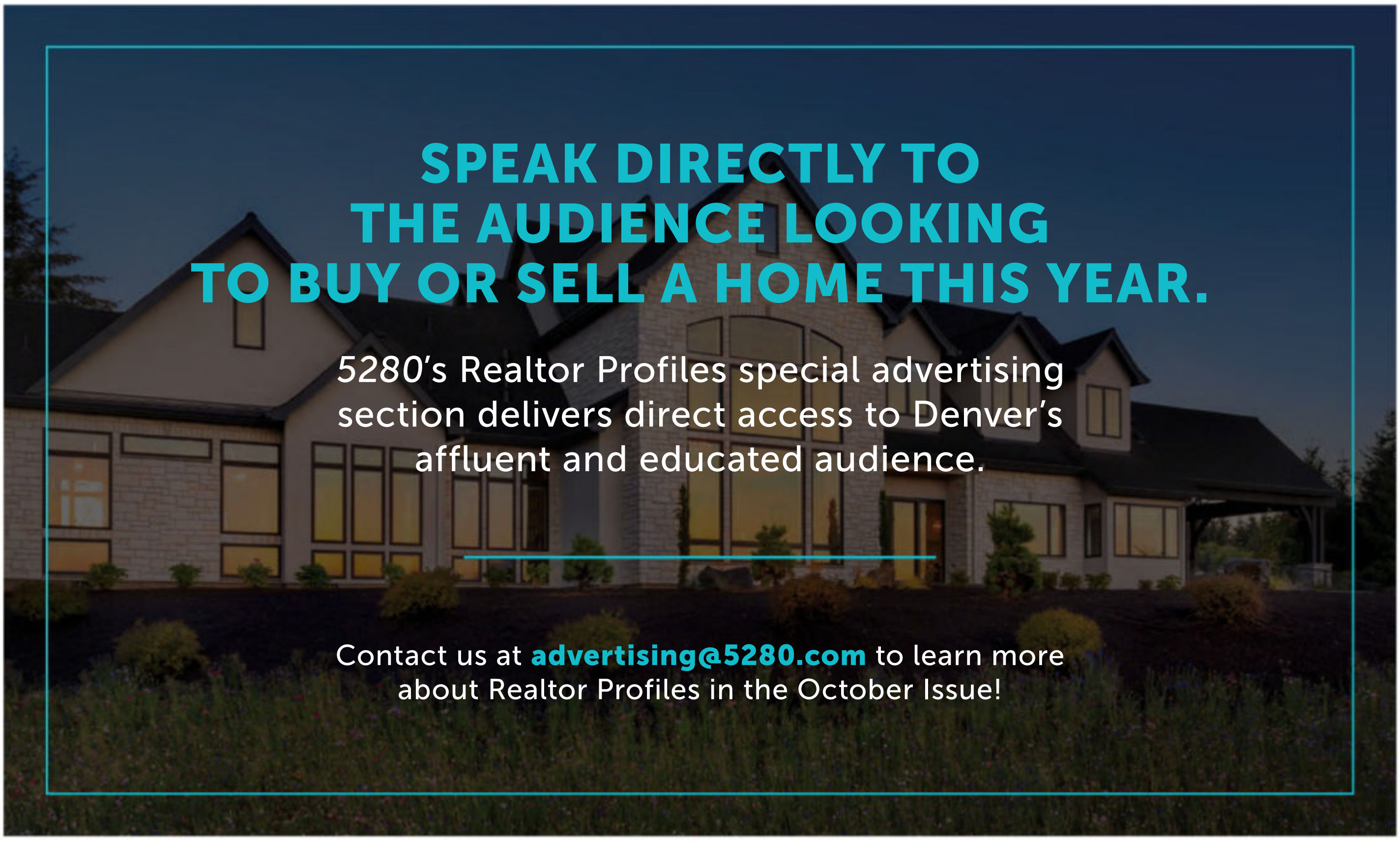

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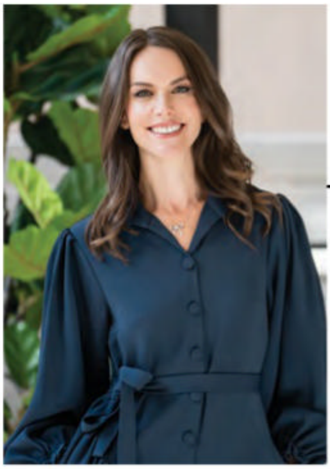

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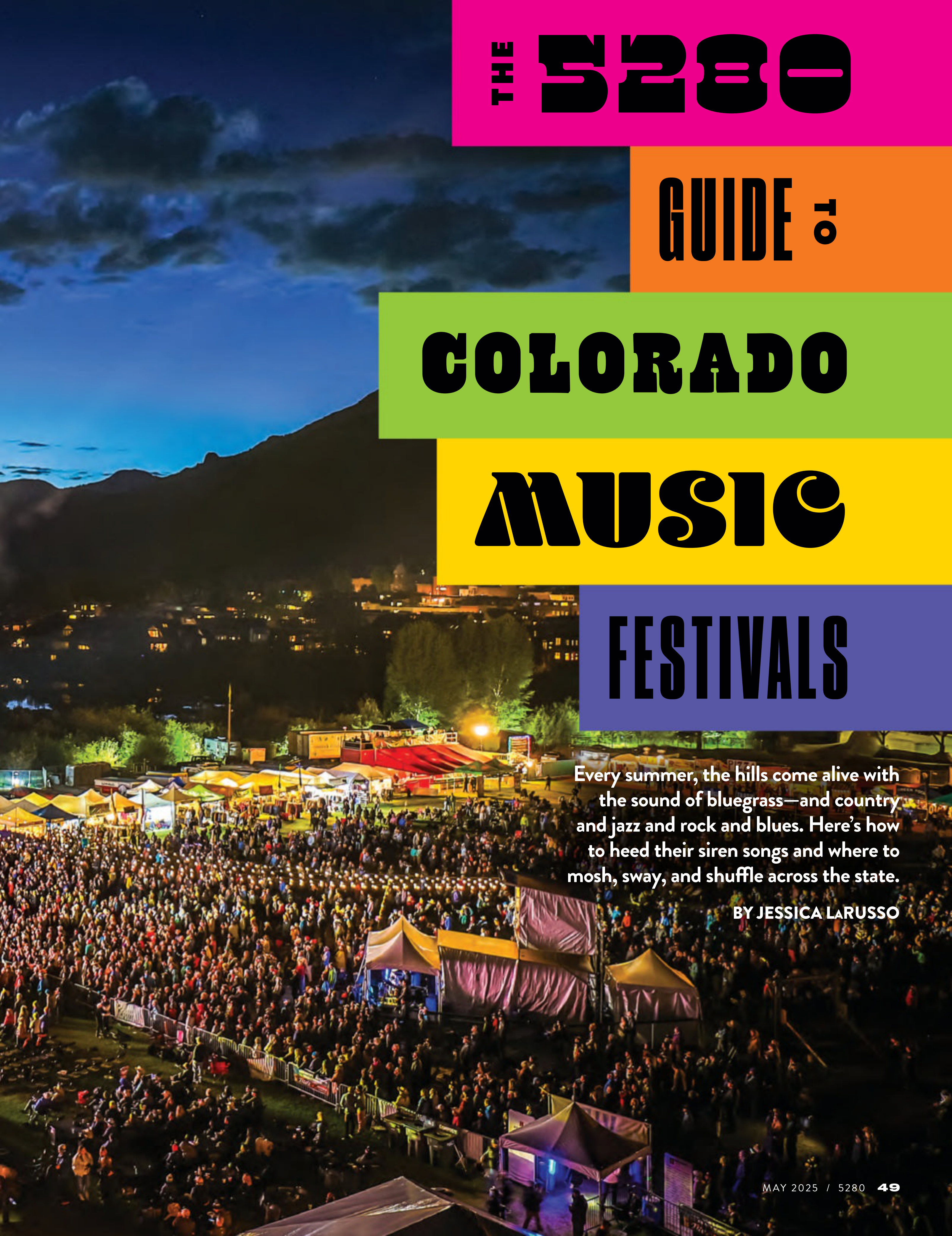
Telluride Blues & Brews Festival



THE 5280 GUIDE TO COLORADO MUSIC FESTIVALS

Every summer, the hills come alive with the sound of bluegrass—and country and jazz and rock and blues. Here's how to heed their siren songs and where to mosh, sway, and shuffle across the state.

BY JESSICA LaRUSSO

Rocky Mountain Folks Festival

FACING THE MUSIC

A group of strummers on a small stage, backed by peaks and forwarded by tie-dye-clad, noodle-dancing revelers, feels essentially Colorado—but recent headlines around music festivals have not been harmonious. NPR pondered if 2024 was "the year the music festival died," cancellation announcements abound, and even big-time gatherings such as Coachella are no longer selling out. Production costs have soared along with inflation, making the already low-profit-margin endeavors even riskier. Colorado is not immune to those pressures: Planet Bluegrass' Wildflower FallGrass in Lyons, Alma's jam-happy Elevation Music Festival, electronic dance extravaganza Sonic Bloom in Rye, Denver's Five Points Jazz Fest, and two festivals in Pagosa Springs (the Pagosa Folk 'N Bluegrass Fest and Four Corners Folk Festival) are among the latest casualties.

"We have more tickets available for the Telluride Bluegrass Festival today than we have had at this time in the last 15 years," said Craig Ferguson, president and founder of 37-year-old Lyons-based event producer Planet Bluegrass, in late February. "Is it the economy? Or, have people figured out they can find community on their phone? Do you have less desire to go make that connection elsewhere?"

If it's true that there's a growing lack of interest in collectively experiencing the magic of strings and vocals and percussion and keys coming together in the open air, then there's reason to worry about Colorado's festival scene. Perhaps because of geography (not enough people within a two-hour drive) and the Red Rocks effect (bands and fans prefer the iconic foothills venue to a stage in a field), Denver has never been able to sustain a mega-fest such as Bonnaroo. But what Coloradans have long enjoyed is plenty of boutique festivals where majestic natural settings and groovy vibes are as much of a draw as the tunes.

"I hope it's the economy," Ferguson says. "I hope it's not, *Siri's not so bad, I'll just hang out with her.*" On the following pages, we hope you find inspiration to take out your AirPods, pick up a Hula-Hoop or some glow sticks, and buy a ticket to one of Colorado's remaining al fresco fests—and help keep those stages from going quiet, too.

> **"At Telluride Bluegrass in 1999, I remember ending up on someone's front porch on Oak Street, playing a bunch of songs. Before we knew it, a nice little crowd had gathered to listen. Someone from the festival heard about it, came by, and offered us an hour or so on the Elks Park Stage. For the next 22 or 23 years in a row, Yonder played Telluride Bluegrass—in hundred-degree heat, rain, snow, and beneath rainbows."**
>
> **—Ben Kaufmann,**
> Yonder Mountain String Band

Previous spread: Alive Coverage/Courtesy of Telluride Blues and Brews

FEST·I·VAR·I·AN

In Colorado, there's a word—and plenty of written and unwritten rules—for what it means to be a reverent and righteous music festival attendee.

For the droves who lay down their tarps at Colorado music festivals each year, the gatherings are about much more than the tunes emanating from the stages. Particularly at events run by Planet Bluegrass—which puts on Telluride Bluegrass Festival in addition to RockyGrass and Rocky Mountain Folks Festival, both held on its bucolic Lyons property—tight-knit communities have developed, and its members call themselves festivarians.

"I'm sure [the term festivarian] was used somewhere else, but no one else is taking credit for it," Craig Ferguson, president of Planet Bluegrass, says. "So, for 30 years, I have." In a play on C.P. Cavafy's poem "Ithaka," Ferguson coined the word in a 1994 Planet Bluegrass brochure. Since then, it has come to embody a shared set of values you won't always find at mega-fests like Coachella or Lollapalooza.

"It's a friendly group of people that takes care of others, takes care of themselves, and has fun—but not at another's expense," says Lucas Ingmire, a recruiter by day who moonlights as the moderator of Planet Bluegrass' Festivarian Forum (festivarian.com). The site hosts decades' worth of threads with tips and event updates as well as a ticket exchange that, in the festivarian spirit, does not allow resales above face value.

Although Planet Bluegrass has codified a Festivarian Bill of Rights—which includes 10 entries that range from access to filtered local drinking water and compost and recycling facilities to the freedom to ignore text messages and be welcomed into jam sessions—there's a lot more that goes into being a festivarian exemplar (and having a great time). We asked Ingmire, aka thewiz on the forum, to break down the Planet Bluegrass regulations and etiquette you need to know.

DO

Have a tarp strategy. Many folks choose to get a number in the festivals' various daily lottery systems and send in a sprinter—each allowed one 10-by-10-foot tarp—as soon as the field is open every morning and their place in the queue is called. The ritual is called Tarp Run, and participants are often trying to score prime spots for shade, acoustics, and/or viewing the stage. It's also helpful if you want to secure a spot for a large group. However, Ingmire says, "tarp surfing" can be a very effective tactic, especially for small groups: The Festivarian Bill of Rights states that "Festivarians shall assume the right to occupy empty tarp spaces until said owners return, at which time Festivarians have the right to become lifelong friends."

Clean up after yourself. Since Planet Bluegrass began offering composting services at Telluride in 2003, its commitment to what it calls Sustainable Festivation has grown to include purchasing carbon offsets for Telluride's impact and providing reusable plates and cups in Lyons.

DO NOT

Be a jerk. There are rules for when and where you can stand, dance, and Hula-Hoop and regulations for chair and shade structure heights. But regardless, Ingmire says, festivarians should remain aware of those around them and make sure they're not impeding anyone's view.

Get intimidated. From securing tickets and camping passes to navigating Land Rush (kinda like Tarp Run, but for landing a spot for your tent) to knowing what to bring and where to charge your phone, the logistics can feel overwhelming. But, says Ingmire, "If you have questions, just go to the forum and ask." In addition to Ingmire, long-timers like Crawdaddy, Todd G., and Hooch chime in frequently and kindly. The forum is also an excellent guide to the unofficial services and happenings—clothing swaps, crawfish boils, lampshade hat decorating parties, beer shares—in Telluride's Town Park campground. "To me, it's the heart of these festivals," says Ingmire, whose Camp Trailer Smash collects and recycles ice bags.

This spread, from left: Skyler Sun/Courtesy of Planet Bluegrass; Courtesy of Tara Gracer; Courtesy of Caveman Music Festival; NOCOAST/Courtesy of Planet Bluegrass

BLUEGRASS BONANZA

June's Telluride Bluegrass Festival might be the Centennial State's biggest and best-known string band extravaganza, but if you prefer to see the genre's finest in a more intimate setting, consider one of these eight smaller gatherings around Colorado, each of which offers a little something special on the side.

—Courtney Holden

Tico Time Bluegrass Festival

FOR PICKIN' &...ZIPPIN'	**Tico Time Bluegrass Festival** May 16 to 18, 2025	Cross into New Mexico (barely!) for three days of foot-tappin' bluegrass and outdoor adventure, including a 60-foot zipline across the Animas River, at this family-friendly fest 30 minutes south of Durango held at Tico Time River Resort. Attendees play beach volleyball between sets by Railroad Earth and Leftover Salmon.
FOR PICKIN' &...UH, PICKIN'	**SpringFree Bluegrass Festival** May 23 to 25, 2025	On second thought, leave the bluebells and larkspur in the ground and let Phoffman of Greensky Bluegrass and the Nicki Bluhm Band handle the plucking. You should focus on getting your hands-raised, hips-swaying, air-mandolining groove on at one of SpringFree Bluegrass Festival's three free stages in Vail Village.
FOR PICKIN' &...DIPPIN'	**Palisade Bluegrass & Roots Festival** June 6 to 8, 2025	Float, kayak, SUP: Water-based fun abounds at the Palisade Bluegrass & Roots Festival, held along the Colorado River at aptly named Riverbend Park. Dry off to see the California Honeydrops croon with retro soul or the Brothers Comatose prompt some banjo-inspired boot-stompin'.
FOR PICKIN' &...JAMMIN'	**RockyGrass Festival** July 25 to 27, 2025	With Bill Monroe, Béla Fleck, and Alison Krauss as past headliners, 53-year-old RockyGrass in Lyons caters to serious strings-lovers who appreciate a killer chord progression—and can maybe play one themselves. The pairing of this fête with RockyGrass Academy (see "Fiddling Around," at right) ensures late-night campground jam circles.
FOR PICKIN' &...HIKIN'	**Snowygrass Music Festival** August 21 to 24, 2025	Despite the name, the only flakes you're likely to find at Estes Park's Snowygrass Music Festival are those you tread upon during a dawn patrol ascent in nearby Rocky Mountain National Park. Après-hike to the tunes of Grammy-nominated Bruce Molsky and world-renowned banjo player Tony Trishcka at this kid- and dog-friendly gathering.
FOR PICKIN' &...SIPPIN'	**Bluegrass & Beer Festival** August 2 to 3, 2025	Come to Keystone for the four-part vocals of the Last Revel and Chain Station's high-energy strumming; stay for craft pours from Breckenridge Brewery, Dillon Dam Brewery, and Keystone's Steep Brewing Co. The 28-year-old event includes a kids zone with crafts, face painting, and something called the Cave of Confusion.
FOR PICKIN' &...PEEPIN'	**FreeFall Bluegrass Festival** October 10 to 12, 2025	Gratis in moniker and price alike, Vail's FreeFall Bluegrass Festival brings all the pumpkin spice vibes any music-loving leaf peeper could want. Attendees snuggle into their favorite flannel and sip spiked cider while headliners—often big names like mandolinist Sam Bush—share the limelight with autumn's golden display.
FOR PICKIN' &...RIPPIN'	**WinterWonderGrass** February 26 to March 1, 2026	For bluegrass with a side of blue runs, check out WinterWonderGrass, a four-day string-band-meets-snowglobe affair at Steamboat Ski Resort. Don your puffy and dance in a Champagne powderstorm to the musical stylings of bluegrass big shots who have, in years past, included the Infamous Stringdusters and Billy Strings.

Stephen Ross Scuba/Courtesy of Tico Time

FIDDLING AROUND

On its 20-acre riverside property north of Lyons, Planet Bluegrass plays host to the next generation of pickers and songwriters.

In a grassy expanse filled with tents and tapestry-adorned pop-up canopies, the sounds of stringed instruments begin to fill the air, drowning out the burbling river that edges the east side of the campground as the last rays of sun slide off the reddish cliffs beyond it. Folks mill around, hugging friends they haven't seen since last summer's RockyGrass Academy—an annual pickin' school held since 1992 at Planet Bluegrass in Lyons the week before the eponymous festival—and arranging camping chairs into jam circles. The music continues well into the night, and players shift from group to group, trying out their chemistry.

"One year, it had gotten really dark out," says Christie Schneider, a fiddler from Lafayette, "and [professional musician] Jake Schepps sat down next to me. I could tell just by his banjo playing that it was him." The formal educating happens during the day, when sessions—some led by performers who will take the stage at the weekend festival—for banjo, fiddle, guitar, mandolin, bass, dobro, and, new this year, clawhammer banjo and old-time fiddle are held under shade structures spread across the property. But the summer camp vibes are what many of the 270-some adults (and around 35 of their kids, age seven and up, who have their own programming) return for, year after year.

"Bluegrass is a tradition that's been passed along from generation to generation, sort of an oral exchange of this music," says Kyra Holt, who attended RockyGrass Academy in her teens and now oversees schools and sustainability for Planet Bluegrass. "There's so much value to sitting down with somebody and playing with them." The same ethos powers Planet Bluegrass' Song School, where in the days leading up to the Rocky Mountain Folks Festival (August 8 to 10), aspiring songwriters can camp out and learn about everything from copyright law to stage presence. "We would like to be a springboard for a lot of these musicians," Holt says.

Campers may or may not find fame or future bandmates, but they're almost guaranteed to make friends. "It's really fun because you meet a bunch of people," says 13-year-old Stowe Schneider, who has attended RockyGrass Academy with his mom, Christie, and nine-year-old brother, Everett, for the past two summers. Says Christie: "A lot of it is about the classes and instruction, but a lot of it is just about this awesome time hanging in a special place to play music. And to share that with your kids—it's pretty cool to be able to go to camp with them, where we're both learning."

> “The South Park Music Fest [in 2014] was a big old production. I think it was the first time I ever saw a drone just floating in the air filming us during 'Handlebars.' I remember dedicating the song to the drone. After Flobots finished, everyone else went home, but I stayed behind.... I ended up just wandering around in the backstage area chatting for hours with members of Hieroglyphics, who were childhood influences of mine."
>
> **—Jamie Laurie (aka Jonny 5),** Flobots

Rocky Mountain Folks Festival

From left: Lauren Hartmann/Courtesy of Planet Bluegrass; Courtesy of Amber Feldman

HIGH NOTES

For more than three decades, Jazz Aspen Snowmass founder Jim Horowitz has been bringing the world's biggest acts to the heart of the Rockies.

What do B.B. King, Stevie Nicks, Foo Fighters, Macy Gray, Bob Dylan, Tom Petty, Bonnie Raitt, and Santana have in common? They've all heeded Jim Horowitz's call to come to Pitkin County (population: 16,640) and perform on open-air stages backed by the Elk Mountains. An aspiring lawyer turned jazz pianist turned agent, Horowitz started Jazz Aspen Snowmass (JAS), a nonprofit that has generated more than $10 million for Colorado music education programs, in 1991. His first event, held in downtown Aspen's Benedict Music Tent, grew into today's four-day JAS June Experience, the year-round JAS Café concert series, and the organization's marquee offering, the Labor Day Experience. Every year, as many as 10,000 people descend on Snowmass Town Park to groove to genre-spanning acts typically found in massive arenas. We caught up with Horowitz in advance of this year's fest (August 29 to 31, featuring headliners Imagine Dragons, Lenny Kravitz, and Luke Combs), where he and JAS will be inducted into the Colorado Music Hall of Fame.

5280: What moved you to found JAS?

Jim Horowitz: I had booked a tour in Europe, and the last stop was this amazing festival in a small medieval village in southwestern France. It was called Jazz in Marciac, and that festival changed my life. It became my inspiration: the format, the sophistication, the music, the crowd, everything about it. It took place in a tent on a rugby field. It was 1989, and it happened that I was going straight from that trip to visit my parents, who were in Aspen. The next day, we went to a concert at the Benedict Music Tent, and I said, "I'm going to start a festival right here in Aspen, in this tent; that's my new plan in life." They looked at me like, *Really?*

How do you get such big names?

You just invite them. And you pay them. Airline tickets to here are twice as expensive, but it's the cost of doing business. Our festival has a great reputation. Artists love coming here; they like the way they're treated. They love the quality of the audience, the reception, the warmth. The bigger problem at this point is that everybody wants to come back all the time.

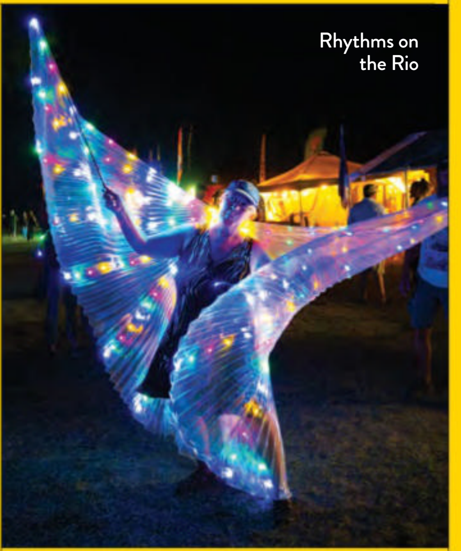
Can you pick out a favorite JAS memory?

Keith Urban, in 2013. It was one of those summer days where the sky was kind of gray and soupy, not that beautiful bluebird Colorado sky we love so much. When it's an outdoor festival and you look at the sky and it looks funky, you don't get to reschedule. It didn't get worse, it didn't rain, but by show time, it had been dark all day and the clouds were even lower. The band, like 10 people with horns and backups, played great for about 30 minutes, and then it started to rain, lightly and steadily. Your heart is sinking, if you're in charge—I am just going, *Oh no, this is gonna get canceled*. The song ended, and there was a pause. And, by the way, nobody had left. These are Colorado people; they come dressed. Everybody had their coats. But you're going, *What's going to happen?* Keith took a breath, and he said, "OK, fellas, y'all just get off the stage. I don't want to worry about you and your electric equipment. I'll take it from here." And what happened was Keith puts the electric guitar down, and he picks up an acoustic guitar. He proceeded to do an hour uninterrupted. It never stopped raining, and every song that he sang was a song with the word "rain" in it. It was complete magic.

Steve Mundinger/Courtesy of Jazz Aspen Snowmass

FIND YOUR GROOVE

The lineup may be what gets you to buy tickets, but in Colorado, at least, a festival's campground vibe is an experience all its own. At these four destination events, the mood among the tents and RVs not only matches the music—it enhances it. —*Spencer Campbell*


Rhythms on the Rio

ROWDY

What do you get when you put 100,000 good ol' boys and girls in the middle of nowhere? **Country Jam Colorado**—three days of honkytonking revelry in Mack, 25 miles outside of Grand Junction. Festivalgoers will tell you the top draws are the A-list performers, such as this year's headliner, Luke Bryan, but the campgrounds are attractions unto themselves—raucous Redneck Rivieras moved inland.

Dates: June 26–28

Must-have gear: Beer-pong table

Bonus gear: Stars and stripes (in whatever decorative expression available)

Prestige gear: Mobile aboveground pool

Prices: $262 to $409 for a spot (sizes vary) in the Standard Campground; $512 for a 20-by-40-foot spot in the Premier Campground; the VIP Campground is sold out

GROOVY

As you might imagine from a festival that boasts headliners such as Daniel Donato's Cosmic Country ("country, rock, and psychedelia"), Del Norte's **Rhythms on the Rio** stirs the spirit of the '60s—an aura that radiates to its campsite communes along the banks of the Rio Grande.

Dates: July 31–August 3

Must-have gear: Swimsuit

Bonus gear: Tube (the river boasts a human-made wave feature near festival grounds)

Prestige gear: Volkswagen van-turned-camper

Prices: $15 camping pass for youth, $30 for adults; $120 for 20-to-30-foot vehicles, $140 for 30-to-40-foot vehicles, $160 for 40-to-50-foot vehicles; $500 for group camping (50-foot-by-50-foot campsite)

OUTDOORSY

In the cloistered valley of Monument Lake Resort in Weston, the diverse Americana tunes (from Toadies to Jamestown Revival) at four-year-old **Caveman Music Festival** reverberate throughout the 368-acre property, meaning you can take a hike, cast your line, or retire to your home base without missing your favorite song.

Dates: August 28–31

Must-have gear: Hiking boots

Bonus gear: Stand-up paddleboard (rent though the resort's marina, $25 per hour, or bring your own)

Prestige gear: Luxury pontoon boat with a water slide (for a booze cruise on the mile-long lake; from $450 for three hours)

Prices: $200 for a primitive tent site; $600 for a primitive RV site; $499 for an unfurnished glamping tent; $3,508 for a furnished glamping tent with four VIP passes (includes festival tickets)

SERENE

On pause since 2019, **Campout for the Cause** will re-emerge this year at the Hutchinson Ranch in Salida, where an intimate 2,000-max festivalgoers will experience yoga classes, wellness workshops, and the soulful banjo-plucking of bluegrass bands like Elephant Revival and Moontricks—then sleep in tents with views of the Sawatch Range.

Dates: September 19–20

Must-have gear: Yoga mat

Bonus gear: Instrument (for Camp Coletrain, an on-site music workshop)

Prestige gear: Fishing pole (the gold-medal waters of the Arkansas River border the property)

Prices: $58 for car camping; $58 for walk-in camping; $146 for RVs

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“The event directly before my band took the stage at a music festival in Durango was a hot-dog-eating contest, so people were riled up in a weird kinda way. The music my band was playing was gentle, thoughtful folk music—not what you'd normally be moved to crowd-surf to—and yet someone in a neon green full bodysuit jumped on stage midset and tried to stage dive into the crowd below…. We stopped the show and made sure they were OK; they ran away unscathed. It's been nearly 17 years and I haven't forgotten that resilient neon wannabe crowd surfer at a folk music show.” —**Esmé Patterson,** formerly of Paper Bird

From top: Scott Seifert Photography/Courtesy of Rhythms on the Rio; Courtesy of Rachel Winslow

TELLURIDE OR BUST

Going to a festival held in Telluride's distinctive box canyon is a bucket-list experience. But given the ski town's remoteness and, well, bougie-ness, checking it off can be logistically and financially difficult. Use the following cheat sheet to figure out which of its marquee events is worth blowing half your annual concert budget on.

Telluride Bluegrass Festival

TELLURIDE BLUEGRASS FESTIVAL
2025 Dates: June 19–22
2025 Headliners: Jason Isbell and the 400 Unit, Greensky Bluegrass, Toy Factory Project, Alison Krauss & Union Station featuring Jerry Douglas
Camping + Full Festival Pass: From $500 per person (kids 12 and under are free)
Single-Day Festival Pass: $130
Weather: Highs in the low 70s; lows in the mid-30s; June averages four days of rain
Daily Attendance: ~12,000
Bonus Track: A group called Living Folklore has been bringing giant puppets, stilt walkers, face painting, clown-led yoga, crafts, and other activities for kids to the festival's family tent for a quarter of a century.

TELLURIDE JAZZ FESTIVAL
2025 Dates: August 8–10
2025 Headliners: Kamasi Washington, Trombone Shorty & Orleans Avenue, Karl Denson's Tiny Universe
Camping + Full Festival Pass: From $337 per person (kids 11 and under are free)
Single-Day Festival Pass: $100
Weather: Highs in the mid-70s; lows in the low 40s; August averages 10 days of rain
Daily Attendance: ~2,500
Bonus Track: Jazz After Dark (Friday and Saturday nights, $35 each) keeps the music going long after sundown with shows spread across three venues in historic downtown Telluride. On Sunday, festivarians are also welcome to dress up and join a brass-band-led parade down Main Street.

TELLURIDE BLUES & BREWS FESTIVAL
2025 Dates: September 12–14
2025 Headliners: The Black Crowes, Thundercat, Lukas Nelson
Camping + Full Festival Pass: From $403 per person (kids 12 and under are free)
Single-Day Festival Pass: From $126
Weather: Highs in the high 60s; lows in the mid-30s; September averages eight days of rain
Daily Attendance: ~9,000
Bonus Track: Attend one of four tastings ($33 to $49) at the Brewers Showcase, where more than two dozen breweries offer rare pours. For true hop-heads, there's a Thursday night multicourse, beer-paired dinner ($195) at Madeline Hotel & Residences with commentary from the participating breweries and a performance by one of the musicians playing the festival.

> "By a long mile, Telluride Bluegrass is my favorite music festival because of the extraordinary charm and beauty of Telluride. This festival also has such a variety of musical genres extending beyond bluegrass. My favorite year included the Flaming Lips and David Lindley, who I witnessed using a vibrator to play his amazing slide guitar."
>
> —**Todd Park Mohr,**
> Big Head Todd & the Monsters

From top: Suchitra Baker/Courtesy of Planet Bluegrass; Matt Nager

CHILD'S PLAY

A Denver mom reflects on taking her kids, from three months to 10 years old, to Telluride Bluegrass Festival—and shares her top tips for making core memories while avoiding meltdowns.

My husband and I went to Telluride Bluegrass for three years before we had children. His family had been going for maybe three decades prior to that, so he had been there as a kid and remembered how fun it was. After we became parents, we really wanted to keep going on adventures, so even though our first was only three months old at festival time, we decided to just go. We brought our second at four months.

When they were really young, we'd go back to where we were staying during the day and recalibrate. Later, though, in addition to our shade canopy, we got a little tent we'd set up with a sound machine and a fan for naps. We invested in one of those Thule trailers we could hook up to a bike and brought everything we thought we might need. I had a printout for each day, so I could cross off my packing list; it made me feel safe and secure that I had the snacks, the sunscreen, all the forms of ear protection, the diapers. I would bring word puzzles and Legos—I wanted to watch the music, so it helped for them to have things to do.

My biggest pro tip is to bring a little inflatable pool. We had five- or 10-gallon camping jugs with sprayers that we'd fill up at the water station and bring back. It was hours of entertainment. Kids from everywhere would come over to play. In the same way that *our tarp is your tarp*, you know, *our pool is your pool*.

That helped with the midday heat, but if you live in Colorado, you know—if you want to stay all day, you literally have to have a swimsuit and a hat, mittens, and handwarmers; it can go from the 30s to 90 and back down to 30 again. And with the elevation, I always had water on me for the kids. I attached their bottles to a waist bag with carabiners. I'd think, *Oh, we're just gonna go get a smoothie*. But then they decide they want to go to the kids area, and all of a sudden they haven't had a sip of water in an hour.

Speaking of, absolutely take advantage of the kids area, which has a bathroom that is cleaner, with less lines, than the general port-a-potties. They always have things going on—face painting, yoga, even theater programming. And you can bring your adult beverage in.

Of course, the music is amazing, and I love introducing my kids to all different styles. The morning is way more relaxed, and then it kind of amps up throughout the day. Those last two acts maybe get a little rowdier. It's not a bad vibe. That's just when we usually decided to run around in the back, not push to the front. One time we tried to stay for an evening show, and all of a sudden the kids were like, *I'm only seeing butts right now*. But the people are great. There are so many families, and we all start to notice, *OK, that kid goes with those parents*, and watch out for one another.

We've made so many memories, but one stands out: Our daughter walked for the first time at Telluride. We were up front; it was getting later, after nap. We were sitting on a blanket, encouraging her to try to go back and forth between us—and she took six steps! The crowd all around us was cheering for her, Jerry Douglas was playing, and the sun was shining…it was just the coolest moment.

—Carrie Horn, as told to Jessica LaRusso

Telluride Bluegrass Festival

Suchitra Baker/Courtesy of Planet Bluegrass

Underground Music Showcase

ROCK ON

The Underground Music Showcase has been elevating local indie bands for 25 years. Nonprofit co-owner Youth on Record has a plan to make sure the show goes on for another quarter-century.

Held across a series of outdoor stages and indoor venues along South Broadway, the Underground Music Showcase (July 25 to 27) has always been inherently more accessible for attendees than many of the state's remote mountain festivals. Denverites can groove to the sounds of more than 200 mostly up-and-coming local or regional acts (Nathaniel Rateliff and DeVotchKa both played UMS before making it big) then go home and sleep in their own beds. Passes for the whole weekend start at $80. Can't afford that? Volunteer for one five-to-six-hour shift working a box office or a bar to earn a wristband for free. "The highest price you can pay for UMS for three days and more than 200 shows is $180 for VIP. That's one Red Rocks ticket," says Jami Duffy, the executive director of local nonprofit Youth on Record, which became a co-owner of UMS in 2022.

But money is only one of the barriers Duffy—who now manages the festival alongside Casey Berry, the founder of Denver entertainment company and UMS co-owner Two Parts—is dismantling. Sober herself for nearly a decade, Duffy wants to normalize that choice, in part by adding sober bars and spaces. She's creating more ways for young people to get involved, work shifts, and learn about the music industry. And in 2023, UMS launched an accessibility plan to ensure people of all abilities could experience the festival; UMS has since implemented improvements like special viewing areas and signage to help with navigation.

"I really just saw this as an opportunity of saying, *This is the coolest music festival in Colorado, and it also can be really mission-focused without losing its awesome indie edge*," Duffy says. That mission extends beyond festgoers to include—and even prioritize—the well-being of the musicians, whom Duffy describes as her "first clients." Over the past three years, more than 300 of them have attended an annual two-day summit Duffy helped develop that's free for UMS artists; workshop and panel topics include networking, how to get radio airplay, and mental health care. Musicians also have access to a substance-free, snack-stocked artist care lounge during the festival and get paid a minimum of $200 for solo acts and $400 for bands (who are often asked to play fests for free).

"With your ticket, you know, *Wow, I'm paying for thriving artist wages. I'm paying for an artist conference. I am supporting an accessibility plan. I am ensuring that we have a really diverse lineup. I'm making sure artists get the care they need*," Duffy says. "You can feel really good about your ticket, because you are genuinely investing in the Colorado music ecosystem." So far, the strategy seems to be working: Bucking industry trends, UMS ticket sales were up last year. "I think festgoers are looking for a more boutique experience that feels like community," Duffy says. "UMS is that perfect size and festival for what audiences want."

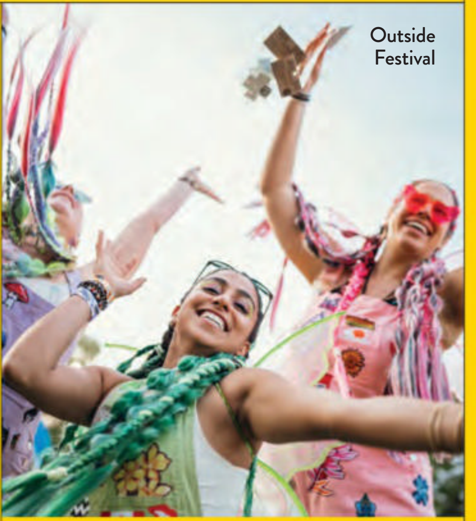
Nikki A. Rae Photography/Courtesy of Underground Music Showcase (UMS)

THE CITY BEAT

Whether your Spotify rotation leans heavily toward Pantera or Raffi, Denver has a music festival for you this summer. *—SC*

MAY 31–JUNE 1
Too busy putting out fires at the office to escape the urban jungle this summer? **Outside Festival** will bring the dulcet sounds of acoustic guitars played around a campfire to you. The second edition of this two-day festival at Civic Center Park features the emo strumming of Khruangbin, Lord Huron, and Trampled By Turtles, though the event's speakers' summit might boast the more impressive lineup: Climbing legend Alex Honnold, professional snowboarder and cancer survivor Kimmy Fasani, and National Geographic Explorer Albert Lin are among the luminaries scheduled to appear. *$95 for one-day general admission*

JUNE 7
For an easy introduction to live music for your littles, check out the inaugural **Indiewood Street Festival**, where national and local acts, including Denver Latin folk group Kiltro, will perform in downtown Englewood. The city will shutter stretches of West Hampden Avenue and South Acoma Street to cars from 1 p.m. to 7 p.m. so families can safely walk from food trucks to vendors to the stage. *$25 for general admission; $20 for Englewood residents; $9 for kids ages four to 12; free for kids under four*


Outside Festival

JULY 4
Celebrate our nation's independence the way Ben Franklin intended: with glow sticks. Following their annual two-day dance-a-thon at Red Rocks Amphitheatre, the Canadian EDM duo Zeds Dead will host the Fifth Annual **Deadbeat Backyard Jamboree** at Civic Center Park. In addition to dropped beats, expect food trucks, inflatable slides, and, of course, a massive hot-dog-eating contest. *$78–$107 for general admission*

JULY 18–20
Despite its penchant for Patagonia, Denver is pure punk—at least according to the traveling Punk in the Park festival, which decided to hold its longest and largest carnival in the Mile High City this year. Occupying two stages at the National Western Stockyards Event Center, **Punk in the Park** will bring 40 bands to the Mile High City, including legends of the genre such as Bad Religion, Descendents, Dropkick Murphys, and Pennywise. *$145 for three-day general admission*

JULY 26–27
To the delight of hard-core metal fans (and, perhaps, the dismay of nearby neighbors), prolific beer-focused concert promoter Brew Ha Ha Productions announced it will host the inaugural **Unhinged Fest** at the National Western Stockyards Event Center this summer. Knocked Loose and Lamb of God will headline, but maybe wear a mouthguard in the mosh pit to protect your palate: For an extra $15, patrons can partake in craft beer tastings from noon to 3 p.m. *General admission starts at $169 for the weekend*

AUGUST 22–24
Ghost Canyon Fest had yet to release a 2025 lineup by press time. Even if organizers had, it's doubtful you'd know the headliners—and that's the point. A true underground event founded by four local musicians, the festival fills the Skylark Lounge (August 22) and Hi-Dive (August 23 to 24) with experimental bands that have different sounds, but all proudly share a similar vibe: weird. *Pricing TBD*

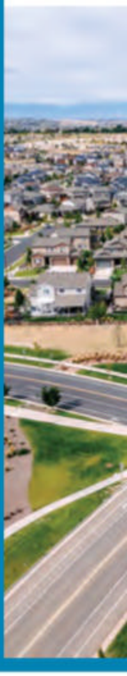
“Out of the many Colorado festival experiences we've had (like Nate and Patrick Meese's legendary unofficial UMS party, where Nathaniel Rateliff and the Night Sweats played on the roof of their house), one stands out as the most bizarre. We played the Taste of Fort Collins Festival about a decade ago. One of the sponsors was a bread company, so apparently everyone was given free bread. For whatever reason the crowd seriously turned on Smash Mouth and started hurling loaves of bread at them. The lead singer had a meltdown over it, and the energy turned weirdly antagonistic. I will never forget watching Steve Harwell sing 'All Star' while dodging loaves of bread. It was dark!” —**Alaina Moore,** Tennis ▲

From top: Courtesy of Outside Festival; Courtesy of Tennis

LIFE

BAR & COCKTAILS

ON



THE EDGE

No one loves Denver more than we do. But with greater room to roam, lower mortgage payments, and easy access to the outdoors, the metro area's suburbs have long tempted downtowners—and that was *before* they had great restaurants. Now that it's cool to call the 'burbs home, we asked local real estate agents to help us find eight of the most compelling satellites that orbit our urban core.

BY MICHELLE SHORTALL PHOTOGRAPHY BY FERNANDO GOMES

LITTLETON

A PUP'S PARADISE Littleton caters to the whole family—including four-legged members. Residents elect an honorary dog mayor (a 10-year-old basset hound named Murdoch currently occupies the seat) every two years, and the city is home to several pup-friendly breweries, including the dog-park-equipped Coal Mine Ave Brewing Company. What else would you expect from a town that set the Guinness World Record for largest dog wedding ceremony in 2007, when 178 canine couples said their *I roos*? For the cat loyalists: Urban Sophisticats, the state's first feline-only grooming salon, has been producing purrs in downtown Littleton since 2013.

➔ With its stellar schools, ample lot sizes, and access to outdoor recreation, Littleton boasts the standard perks of a Denver suburb. But it also offers something many don't. "Downtown Littleton is actually pretty lit," says Sam Neumann, a broker's associate at Compass Real Estate. The Arapahoe County seat's Main Street—which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1998—is lined with locally owned restaurants and shops, providing a soulful antidote to chain-store malaise. Order up avocado margaritas at 18-month-old Cencalli Taqueria, cure post-hike hunger with a locally sourced steak burger at Grande Station Scratch Kitchen, and satisfy a sweet tooth at Little Man Ice Cream's newest location, which opened this past October. For retail therapy, peruse women's consignment fashion at True Find Boutique or find gifts sourced from around the globe at Willow and Tulaire. On weekends, Town Hall Arts Center hosts live performances for both adults (this month's Gloria and Emilio Estefan bio-musical *On Your Feet!*) and kids (June's *Wizard of Oz*).

Main Street isn't the only stretch of Littleton with character. The city's nearly 14 square miles include distinctive neighborhoods with varied architecture and mature trees. "You can find townhomes in downtown Littleton, single-family new builds in [the new master-planned community] Sterling Ranch, and artsy adobe homes in Roxborough Park," says Neumann, noting that most homes on the market fall within $650,000 to $1 million.

That's not to say that Littleton doesn't have its drawbacks—especially for those who commute to downtown Denver or make frequent trips to DIA. In exchange for a long car ride, though, residents get proximity to more than 1,400 acres of parks and open space and over 200 miles of trails. Locals can bike the Mary Carter Greenway Trail in the morning, hike the scenic Coyote Song Trail with the kids in the afternoon, and take in the sunset from a paddleboard on Chatfield Reservoir.

Sources for By The Numbers throughout: Redfin; census.gov; niche.com

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price **$617,000**	Population **44,451**
Median sale price per square foot **$280**	Median household income **$96,611**
Median days on market **23**	Public schools rating **A**

STRICTLY BIZ
BARBERSHOP
LOCAL
OPEN
General Store
45
Little Man
ICE CREAM

NDE STATION

Credit Tk

ARVADA

When lifelong Arvada resident Erin Houston was a child, the western part of her hometown was wide-open plains, and the only reason her family ever ventured to Olde Town was to see a movie at the multiplex. The theater—which was purchased and renovated by Harkins Theatres in 2017—is still there, but most everything else about Arvada has changed in the past 15 years. A now-thriving Olde Town Historic District has made midcentury ranches in adjacent neighborhoods popular among families. And all that vacant space to the west? It's now dotted with luxe contemporary properties in the Candelas and Leyden Rock developments, within which Houston sells as an area RE/MAX agent.

Houston says folks have flocked to the northwest suburb for its easy access to Boulder, Golden, and Denver—made even simpler with RTD's 2019 debut of the G Line, which provides Arvadans with a straight shot to Union Station—and its relative affordability compared with nearby Broomfield and Superior. "We're one of the least expensive of the suburbs on the northwest side [to buy in]," she says.

Many residents find no reason to leave Arvada—especially after the city closed sections of Olde Wadsworth Boulevard and Grandview Avenue to car traffic, making it safer for pedestrians to stroll Olde Town's shops, including Baja-inspired Mexican restaurant Lady Nomada and artisan jeweler Balefire Goods. In 2024, the Arvada Center picked up more nominations than any other company at the Colorado Theater Guild's annual Henry Awards. Meanwhile, the Apex Center recreation facility (home to two ice rinks, an indoor water park, and a rock-climbing wall) and the Arvada Library (which is currently undergoing a nearly $15 million redesign) offer a diversity of diversions for families of all shapes and sizes.

BRAKE FOR BIKES
Recognized as a Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists, Arvada is a haven for pedalers. Cruise around town on the approximately seven-mile Arvada Bike Loop that passes through several city parks and the Red Rocks Community College campus, join a free group ride with Bike Friendly Arvada, and teach your kiddos how to ride at the city's Bicycle Training Course, a half-acre streetscape featuring educational obstacles.

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price	Median days on market	Median household income
$642,000	22	$113,396
Median sale price per square foot	Population	Public schools rating
$283	121,414	A-

ILLUSTRATIONS BY SEAN PARSONS

KEN CARYL

➔ While visiting one of his sons in Denver in 1913, Midwestern newspaper mogul John Charles Shaffer decided to expand his empire with a string of big purchases: the *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Denver Times*, the *Denver Republican*, and, for $100,000, a huge swath of terrain southwest of Denver. He and his wife, Virginia, named the 2,660-acre plot Ken Caryl after their sons, Kent and Carroll, and turned the land into a profitable cattle ranch until the Great Depression forced the Shaffers to sell the property to the banks.

Today, Ken Caryl features varied neighborhoods and more than 4,800 acres of open space, becoming a haven for buyers in search of a secluded, family-friendly community with views of the foothills, convenient outdoor opportunities (including private trails and direct access to Chatfield State Park to the south), and roaming wildlife. Those amenities are why East Coast transplant Eva Stadelmeier has lived there for 20 years. "With all of the natural beauty and the trails, my first impression was, 'If I'm going to live in Colorado, this is where I need to be,'" says Stadelmeier, a RE/MAX broker.

A natural north-south ridge divides the area into two sections with distinct housing styles. The eastern portion, known as the Ranch, offers starter condos in the mid-$300,000s as well as traditional three- or four-bedroom spec and semi-custom homes starting around $650,000. The western portion, called the Valley, includes three fully custom communities (Barrington Ridge, Manor Ridge, and North Ranch) with prices starting around $1.8 million and topping out at $3.5 million. "A lot of people move in at entry level and then eventually upgrade to the Valley," Stadelmeier says. "We call it the Valley shuffle."

EASY RIDERS
Ken Caryl maintains a Wild West attitude with its beloved Equestrian Center—owned and operated by the local HOA—which features indoor and outdoor riding arenas, 4,800 acres of open space and 50 miles of private trails to trot, and covered barn stalls and pipe pens for monthly boarding. For those still eagerly awaiting the pony on their wish lists, the center hosts hourlong private lessons ($70 for residents; $84 for nonresidents) and Barn Buddies sessions ($65), during which little ones learn about grooming and caring for horses and participate in a guide-led ride.

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price	Median days on market	Median household income
$550,000	37	$116,838
Median sale price per square foot	Population	Public schools rating
$288	33,772	A-

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price	$463,000
Median sale price per square foot	$226
Median days on market	46
Population	395,052
Median household income	$84,320
Public schools rating	B

AURORA

As the most racially diverse city in Colorado, Aurora is a cultural melting pot—and its abundance of global cuisines and flavors is a testament to that. "It's the best food scene in all of Colorado," says Colin Dart, a Milehimodern broker who lived in Aurora for three years and owns multiple rental properties there. "I'll stand by that all day long." The city is home to several international markets and grocery stores and 250 ethnic eateries, many of which line a four-plus-mile stretch of Havana Street. Seoul Korean BBQ & Hot Pot serves up an array of savory broths; Dân Dã invites customers to build their own Vietnamese spring rolls; and Nile Ethiopian Restaurant's spicy lamb stew makes the perfect dip for its spongy injera. One of Dart's favorite places to eat in Aurora? East Colfax's Mango House, a refugee community center and food hall that dishes out delicious Japanese, Burmese, and Nepali flavors.

At 164 square miles, Aurora stretches from Cherry Creek State Park on its southwestern border to DIA at its northeastern door. That kind of ground coverage results in a range of housing types. "You're going to find nice, move-in-ready homes for probably the most affordable prices you'll see in all of the metro suburbs," Dart says. Custom midcentury builds in hidden-gem neighborhoods such as Highland Park start in the $500,000s, while those seeking more space can find quintessential McMansions in southeast Aurora beginning at $1 million. The northeastern section of the suburb teems with new development: Painted Prairie, a 640-acre community, has welcomed over 900 families since breaking ground in 2020; the massive Aurora Highlands neighborhood is hurtling toward a total build-out of 12,500 housing units, 12 neighborhood parks, four schools, and a beach club; and Southshore includes nearly 2,000 homes (built throughout the past two decades) just a mile away from Aurora Reservoir.

As massive as Aurora is, however, you won't find a single mountain within city limits. That doesn't mean it lacks natural appeal. The eastern suburb is ripe with outdoor amenities—including 103 parks and more than 5,000 acres of open space and trails. And if you absolutely need more variety in your landscape? The northern edge of Aurora is less than 10 minutes from the tented white peaks of DIA and their promise of farther-flung places to play.

FULL SWING The best thing about Aurora's vast footprint: more room for golf. The city operates five municipal courses, the crown jewel being Murphy Creek, which was modeled after traditional links layouts in Scotland—a likeness that becomes immediately apparent when the wind howls off the Eastern Plains. The Colorado Golf Association–owned CommonGround Golf Course, meanwhile, has a nine-hole short course ideal for kids and beginners.

WESTMINSTER

DEVELOPING DOWNTOWN The city is transforming the site of the former Westminster Mall, which was demolished in 2011 after a 34-year run, into a walkable city center—something the suburb desperately needs. Situated on a five-block stretch west of Sheridan Boulevard, the new development is already home to Alamo Drafthouse, Bowlero, and Sweet Bloom Coffee; new-build condos and apartments will surround them in the future. A year ago, work began on the district's Center Park—a three-acre landscape equipped with a splash pad, a dog park, and an artificial turf area for hosting city events—which is slated to open next spring.

➔ The state built U.S. 36 in the 1950s with one goal in mind: Connect Denver and Boulder. You could make the argument, though, that the thoroughfare's greatest beneficiary is Westminster, which now serves as the perfect outpost for people who commute to a Denver office but prefer to spend their weekends frolicking in the Boulder Flatirons. "You can really tap into the lifestyle provided by those two larger and very unique cities," Milehimodern broker Colin Dart says.

The artery bisects the 'burb's 34 square miles and provides a clear delineation between its neighborhood styles and price points. "West of 36, you see a lot of midcentury to late '70s builds in the Standley Lake and Walnut Creek areas," Dart says, adding that the area boasts an abundance of starter abodes under $600,000. "In northeast Westminster, you'll find bigger, two-story homes from the mid-'90s with more land; these can cost up to $2 million."

The Denver-Boulder Turnpike also divides the city's outdoor amenities. To the west, Standley Lake—the metro's third-largest reservoir—attracts paddleboarders, kayakers, and anglers, and Westminster Hills Open Space's 470 acres of off-leash land give Fido room to run. To the east, golfers can tee off at Hyland Hills, Legacy Ridge, or the Ranch Country Club courses, and budding entomologists can flutter among thousands of invertebrates at the Butterfly Pavilion. Hikers, runners, and bicyclists, however, don't have to choose a side: Westminster's 150 miles of multiuse trails—from a nearly five-mile section of the northern metro's Rocky Mountain Greenway Trail to a 12-mile swath of Big Dry Creek Trail—straddle the highway.

Yes, the majority of Westminster's dining scene is populated by chain restaurants and fast-food stops, but the city offers a handful of local options. Tucked inside the Origin Hotel, Famille serves modern French cuisine in a chic atmosphere, while Early Bird—Dart's favorite brunch spot in the area—dishes out loaded waffles and gravy-smothered fried chicken in a casual farmhouse environment. And at northside retail destination the Orchard Town Center, shoppers can enjoy a celebratory pint at Windfall Brewing Co. after a successful Lululemon haul.

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price $550,000	Population 114,875
Median sale price per square foot $280	Median household income $96,145
Median days on market 28	Public schools rating B+

CENTRAL PARK

➔ OK, *technically* the residents of Central Park have Denver addresses, but the 7.5-square-mile community has its own singular feel. "We call it the suburb within the city," says Kentwood Real Estate City Properties broker Laura Fuller. And that's by design: After DIA became the Mile High City's air traffic hub in 1995, Denver embarked on one of the largest urban infill projects in the country by transforming the decommissioned Stapleton International Airport's runways, concourses, and terminals into a residential paradise. Today, Central Park is home to about 1,100 acres of parks and open space, 16 highly rated schools, and 12 distinct sub-neighborhoods.

Fuller has lived in the area for 19 years, cementing her self-proclaimed status as "OG Central Park," and appreciates Central Park's A Line light-rail access to the airport, walkable town centers, quiet tree-lined streets, and diverse housing stock. And though the neighborhood's proximity to I-70 has made it a popular landing spot for chain restaurants, Central Park also offers local flavor, from French onion soup dumplings at YumCha to raspberry cream ales at FlyteCo Brewing. "There's something for everyone," Fuller says. Income-based affordable housing, modern condos, and single-family Denver Squares are all available, and prices range from the mid-$200,000s to $2 million. One of Fuller's favorite things about living in Central Park? Its neighborly feel, which is driven by an abundance of narrow lots, pocket parks, and front-porch hangouts. "We're on smaller lots," she says, "which encourage people to get out of their houses and socialize with their neighbors."

SPLASH TOWN
Central Park boasts seven neighborhood pools, all with aviation-themed names. Future Michael Phelpses can practice their breaststrokes in the Maverick's eight 25-meter lap lanes, while beginner swimmers can earn their fins at the Puddle Jumper's variety of fountains and splash pads. Each pool is open to the public, but Central Park residents can purchase exclusive memberships for discounted rates, advance reservations on splash-worthy holidays like July Fourth, and members-only sunset swims.

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price	Median days on market	Median household income
$678,000	30	$166,191
Median sale price per square foot	Population	Public schools rating
$298	31,596	B

ENGLEWOOD

➔ Denver's direct neighbor to the south, Englewood recently revived its downtown stretch of South Broadway with public art installations, upgraded street lighting, and fresh landscaping. These cosmetic changes have made the area a landing spot for local businesses priced out of Denver, including comics and coffeeshop Mutiny Information Cafe and art gallery and studio EASEL. The new additions seamlessly blend with long-standing local favorites, such as the 20-year-old, no-frills Breakfast Queen, where weekday regulars and a bustling weekend brunch crowd dine on stacks of pancakes and piping-hot egg skillets. Across the street, Englewood Grand acts as the neighborhood's *Cheers*-style watering hole, serving up straightforward drinks to a low-key clientele.

In recent years, a younger crowd has settled in the area thanks to family-friendly attractions like Pirate's Cove water park, convenient light-rail access to downtown Denver on the D Line, and 15 parks and over 20 miles of bike paths. "It feels like the up-and-coming Platt Park or Wash Park," says RE/MAX broker Eva Stadelmeier, noting that Englewood's small businesses and architectural variety give the city a sense of charm rarely found in cookie-cutter suburbia. The prices are right, too: Buyers will find a mix of modern, cottage-style townhomes and low-slung midcentury gems (especially within the Arapahoe Acres Historic District) for slightly less than what similar abodes go for in Denver.

SOUTHERN GOTHIC
For culture vultures, Englewood offers a robust music and arts scene that's anchored by South Broadway's Gothic Theatre. Originally built as a movie theater in the 1920s, the Gothic has hosted live music performances since 1999, with Nirvana, the Beastie Boys, Lady Gaga, and Slayer among the iconic acts that have rocked the venue's stage. This summer, concertgoers will line up under the glow of the Gothic's neon sign to hear the electric riffs of guitar legend Buckethead (June 13) and psych rock band Of Montreal (July 26).

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price **$620,000**	Median days on market **58**	Median household income **$82,016**
Median sale price per square foot **$318**	Population **34,275**	Public schools rating **B-**

WHEAT RIDGE

BY THE NUMBERS

Median sale price	$625,000
Median sale price per square foot	$328
Median days on market	32
Population	31,804
Median household income	$87,598
Public schools rating	B+

➔ Kate Dean lived in Berkeley for nine years before her husband suggested moving their growing family to the 'burbs for a bigger footprint and backyard. She was not eager to relocate. "I came to Wheat Ridge in 2017 kicking and screaming because I thought I was a forever Denver girl," says Dean, a former *5280* employee. But now, as a Milehimodern broker who primarily works with clients looking to buy and sell in the area, Dean can't stop herself from rattling off the perks of the place she's called home for eight years. "The peacefulness you get coming just a little bit west, while also being able to get to Highland Square or downtown Denver so quickly, is kind of perfect," Dean says. "You can get more space while being 10 minutes from the best restaurants, the best hiking and trail systems, and mountain access on I-70."

Not that you *have* to leave Wheat Ridge's city limits to find fun. In recent years, several businesses have opened along 38th Avenue, the city's main drag. GetRight's Bakery is a one-stop shop for French pastries, takeout pizzas, and new houseplants. Food-truck-turned-brewpub Mestizo Brew Cantina serves up scratch-made tacos alongside pints of Mexican lager and farmhouse-style saison. And Yawp Cyclery, the state's largest dealer of Surly bikes, tunes up any kind of two-wheeler. Less than three miles away on Kipling Street, renovated shopping center Gold's Marketplace is a buzzing community hub. It houses 15 locally owned tenants that range from Em's Ice Cream to Cosmo's Dog Bakery & Pet Supplies. Right across the street at the 242-acre Crown Hill Park, anglers can cast a line in the bass- and bluegill-rich lake, birders can spot great blue herons and broad-tailed hummingbirds, and speed walkers can work up a sweat on a 1.3-mile loop around the water.

For housing stock, Wheat Ridge is known for its substantial supply of midcentury ranches (starting around $650,000), especially in the Applewood neighborhood, where spacious lots cater to kids and four-legged friends and Front Range views abound. "But you can also find upscale modern and farmhouse-style new builds starting at about $1.6 million," Dean says. "Plus, you get double the backyard space when you move just a mile west of Denver."

ON THE MOVE After decades in the heart of Wheat Ridge, Lutheran Medical Center—the city's largest employer—moved to a newly constructed facility a few miles away this past August. Now called Intermountain Health Lutheran Hospital, the $680 million building is more eco-friendly than its predecessor and features larger patient rooms and more efficient layouts. As for the former 100-acre hospital site? The specifics are TBD, but Wheat Ridge has proposed erecting diverse housing options, creating open spaces and trails, and preserving on-site landmarks such as the Blue House, a 1902 farmhouse that formerly served as nurses' dorms and a teahouse. ▲

12600

WHO IS THE MAN BEHIND THE MOUNTAINS?

Twenty-five years after he launched 14ers.com—the mother lode of Colorado peak-bagging beta—Bill Middlebrook still gets stoked about helping people safely reach the state's highest summits. But what will happen to the free website (and its 133,000 registered users) when its attention-shy founder is finally ready to après?

BY LINDSEY B. KING

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BENJAMIN RASMUSSEN

SKIING DOWN THE COULOIR ON THE NORTH FACE OF 14,268-FOOT MT. BLUE SKY IS ALL ABOUT TIMING.

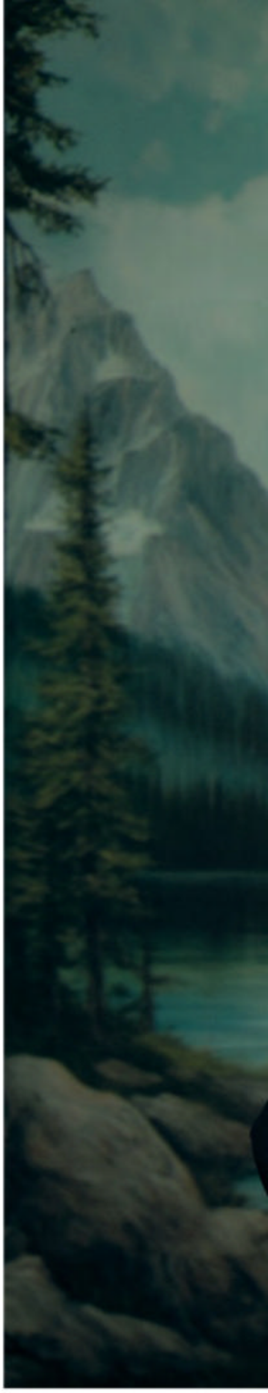
Avalanche danger on the state's 14th tallest peak is particularly high in midwinter, so experienced backcountry skiers know to hold out for the comparatively stable snow of May and June. But it's not just about the time of year; it's also about the time of day. There's a magic hour—sometime after the morning sun has softened up the icy crust and just before those same rays turn the steep slope into a sloppy mess—that people like Bill Middlebrook and Nick Gianoutsos know to wait for. Only then do they drop into the narrow, rock-strewn gully.

The sun was popping in and out of the clouds and the wind was tolerable on June 11, 2023, making it a seemingly ideal day for Middlebrook and Gianoutsos to snap on their crampons, lash skis to their backpacks, and bootpack roughly a mile to the summit. But by mid-morning, the snow was refusing to shed its crunch. The men hung out at the top of what expert skiers consider an intermediate big-mountain line, hoping for even a slight improvement in conditions. When the snow finally began to soften, Gianoutsos, 45, decided to clip in and go first. After he came to a stop partway down the couloir, he turned to watch Middlebrook. He had form worth ogling, but Gianoutsos also felt an outsize responsibility for the then-56-year-old.

Middlebrook wasn't just another ski partner. He was the founder and sole operator of 14ers.com, a website revered by the hiking/climbing/backcountry skiing community for its deeply reported, meticulous trip reports for Colorado's 58 named mountains that rise above 14,000 feet. Every time Gianoutsos went skiing out-of-bounds with Middlebrook, he carried the weight of bringing home safely the quiet, attention-deflecting man who'd nonetheless become something of a cult hero in Colorado.

So, it was with no small amount of horror that Gianoutsos watched as his friend of eight years caught an edge, fell face-first, and careened over a granite outcropping with a 12-foot drop, his Salomon skis and Black Diamond poles scattering in all directions. *Oh crap*, Gianoutsos remembers thinking. *Please let it be just a broken arm*.

Somehow nothing was fractured or shattered, except maybe Middlebrook's confidence. Knowing his fall had also shaken Gianoutsos—who'd just kept saying "that was scary, man, that was scary"—Middlebrook sent an uncharacteristically verbose yet predictably pragmatic text to his partner the next day acknowledging that his aging body might not be able to handle the terrain like it once had. Maybe, he conceded, it was time to think about slowing down.



THE SMELL OF GOOD coffee suffuses the air well before daybreak creeps through the windows in Bill Middlebrook's home office. By 4 a.m. on days when he's not planning to resort ski or make backcountry turns or hike a very tall mountain, the husband and father of two adult children is up and using what he calls "coffee time" to get a jump on his whiteboard checklist. The 14ers.com website—which he launched 25 years ago as a hobby and which currently averages 20,000 unique visitors on summer days—still occupies him for roughly 20 hours a week, not including research time he spends on the trails or sleepless nights spent troubleshooting a server crash.

At five-foot-seven with ruddy brown hair, intelligent eyes, and a coaxable smile, Middlebrook comes across more like the computer whiz he is than the accomplished outdoorsman he also happens to be. Although friends label him an introvert—this is the first lengthy interview he's given about himself or the phenomenon he birthed with 14ers.com—and say he avoids introducing himself as anything other than "Bill" on the trails,

he isn't shy. Unlike most people who have created something undeniably cool, Middlebrook simply doesn't want the laurels. He has always preferred any attention to be centered on the site, not on him. His reticence has, paradoxically, only served to catapult him into the-man-the-myth-the-legend status among those who ply the state's loftiest footpaths.

Icon or not, on any given morning, the retired software engineer might need to update information about new parking rules at some far-flung trailhead or upgrade functionality for one of the site's myriad tools. It's just as likely, though, that Middlebrook recently reclimbed a mountain—something he does about 25 times a year—and has new photographs to add to one of the existing route descriptions he has written and rewritten over the years.

In pursuit of those route descriptions, of which there are 179, Middlebrook has reached the summit of a Colorado fourteener 513 times. He has bootpacked up and skied down 46 of the state's 14,000-foot mountains, including, of course, Mt. Blue Sky. He began laying the foundation for the site way back at the turn of the millennium, when he realized, quite astutely, that websites were going to be able to do something that guidebooks couldn't: remain up to date. "My grand plan was," Middlebrook says, "let's put this on the internet, keep it from becoming obsolete, and provide it in a way that will help people—for free."

Middlebrook could afford to be charitable because, as he says, "I was set." In 1998, he and three partners sold their Massachusetts-based e-commerce software and consulting firm for an undisclosed—but life-alteringly large—amount right at the top of the dot-com bubble. Middlebrook stayed on with the new company for a little more than a year before retiring in February 2000. At 33, Middlebrook looked at his bank account and determined it could handle a little passion project. He didn't want or need to charge users a fee. He was content to buy the domain name and pay the few hundred dollars in annual web-hosting fees to keep his coding skills sharp and his body active.

Except what Middlebrook had created wasn't trivial at all. As it turned out, people were starving for the highly detailed, user-friendly, continually updated, free content he was publishing. They wanted to know when local trail-building organizations had reworked sections of poorly constructed paths. They craved minutiae about U.S. Forest Service restrictions. They needed to understand the risk factors of *this* route versus *that* route.

"It only took a couple of years for me to figure out that this was going to cost a lot of money," Middlebrook says. That's because, over time, he had dressed up the basic route descriptions with thousands of annotated photographs and added tools like maps, user-generated content in the form of trip and condition reports, trailhead status updates, and (in 2005) a forum that allowed registered users to communicate among themselves. "I went from using what's called a shared hosting server to realizing that I needed dedicated equipment and massive amounts of bandwidth to be able to support the volume," he says, "because people weren't just surfing text. They were downloading thousands of photos and maps." With traffic to the site doubling and then doubling again—and then again—costs went from a few hundred dollars a year to upward of $10,000. Middlebrook's vision had always been a fee- and advertisement-free site, but even he couldn't justify such an expensive pastime. Still, a retirement spent on the golf course wasn't going to make Middlebrook happy.

That's how his wife, Lisa, ended up toiling in what she jokingly calls the "14ers sweatshop." Headquartered these days in the basement of the couple's 3,000-square-foot, new-build home in Pine, the sweatshop consists of boxes of T-shirts that Middlebrook designs each year and sells on the site. Over the decades, proceeds from mouse pads, coffee mugs, bumper stickers, and T-shirts emblazoned with "14ers.com" have mostly covered the web-hosting bills. Individual, non-tax-deductible donations and revenue from a few affiliate links have usually helped offset the rest. "I don't mind folding and shipping shirts," Lisa says. "It's for a good cause. He loves it too, even though sometimes when he wears a shirt, he gets recognized, despite how hard he tries to stay incognito. They'll say, 'Are you *the* Bill Middlebrook?'"

IT WAS ABOUT A NINE-MILE bike ride from 14-year-old Bill Middlebrook's house in Lanesborough, Massachusetts, to the Springs Motel, where for two years he washed dishes in the restaurant's kitchen. At 15, he added another gig when he began a five-year run of spinning the lifts and slinging rental equipment

Clockwise from top left: Middlebrook ascending Little Bear Peak; atop Pyramid Peak; behind the camera on Kit Carson Peak; before a ski down Mt. Arkansas, a thirteener

Clockwise from top left: Courtesy of Craig Lizotte (2); Courtesy of Bill Middlebrook; Courtesy of Alex Gelb

at Jiminy Peak, the largest ski resort in the state. Middlebrook and his older brother loved to hike and fish and hunt in the Berkshires, but teenagers in his community knew how to work. That was especially true for Middlebrook, who'd lost his father at nine years old and who'd watched his mother labor at a paper products company for his entire childhood. Also, he says, "I was saving up for a car."

At 18, Middlebrook drove his used Ford Fiesta hatchback a half hour north to North Adams State College, where he enrolled in the school's new computer science program and quickly found he had a knack for software development. After graduation, he worked for a short time at a local consulting firm—which also employed a young woman named Lisa Pettinichi—before splintering off with three co-workers to open the Kodiak Group, a startup that helped companies integrate e-commerce into their operations.

Middlebrook describes 1994 to 2000 as a blur. Of the four co-founders of the Kodiak Group, he was the one with the technical expertise, but computers and the internet were so new to most people at the time that he often had to go on sales trips across the country to explain to potential clients why, for example, there would no longer be any need to fax a purchase order if it could be delivered via electronic transfer. Those aspects of the job could've easily constituted a full-time gig, but Middlebrook was also the guy running cable through the ceilings and rebooting servers when thunderstorms knocked out the power in the middle of the night. He easily logged 70 hours a week. "Each year of that work was equivalent to five years of normal work," he says. "I don't remember much of the '90s. It was very stressful."

But as the Kodiak Group grew—from four to 100 employees—the expansion gave Middlebrook a chance to live out a dream he'd had since first visiting Colorado in the late '80s. "We'd stayed in Winter Park but also skied at Vail and Breckenridge," says Middlebrook, who picked up a few backcountry skiing and hiking guidebooks—such as Gerry Roach's *Colorado's Fourteeners* and Lou Dawson's *Dawson's Guide To Colorado's Fourteeners*—on subsequent trips to the Centennial State. "I was blown away by Colorado, and I was convinced I was going to move here someday."

Someday came in 1998, when the Middlebrooks—who'd married in 1993 and had a daughter in 1995—set up base camp in Evergreen and opened a Kodiak Group office in Lakewood. When he wasn't working, Middlebrook was often skiing or hunting, but he also picked up a new interest: peak bagging.

While still "stuck" in New England, Middlebrook had began paging through those old guidebooks. Quandary Peak quickly caught his attention. The 14,272-foot summit looms large in the Tenmile Range just southwest of Breckenridge Ski Resort, and it looked big and bad to Middlebrook back then—especially when compared with the gentle, rolling loveliness of the sub-3,000-foot Berkshires.

Hiking Quandary for the first time in 1998 ignited in Middlebrook a passion for all of Colorado's fourteeners. He loved how accessible the state's mountains are. He delighted in covering ground simply to see what was around the next bend: crystalline lakes, jagged rocks, fields of blue columbine, squeaking marmots. He reveled in the unobstructed views from above 14,000 feet. The draw of the high country was so irresistible, in fact, that the Middlebrooks ultimately moved from Evergreen to Breckenridge, where Quandary sat in his proverbial backyard.

The then-32-year-old hatched his plan to launch 14ers.com in early 1999 and—with Rush, Led Zeppelin, or a little jazz providing encouragement—began clambering up every 14,000-footer in the state. To fashion route descriptions that would better help hikers avoid going off-trail (and, therefore, getting into potentially environment-damaging, frustrating, or dangerous situations), Middlebrook made sure his daypack included a pen and notebook as well as his 35mm Minolta. "There have been days when I gained an extra 700 feet of elevation," Middlebrook says, "and walked way out of the way just to be able to,

“I WAS BLOWN AWAY BY COLORADO, AND I WAS CONVINCED I WAS GOING TO MOVE HERE SOMEDAY.”

for example, take a picture that might show someone why this *isn’t* the way to go.”

Back in his office, Middlebrook would use a scanner to digitize his four-by-six-inch prints, upload them to the site, and painstakingly embed them into his turn-by-turn route descriptions, the language for which he tried to make uniform and exceptionally clear so site users would come to know what to expect when he wrote “excellent trail” or “difficult terrain” or “semi-exposed area.” Middlebrook didn’t stop at the so-called standard route—the most well-established and usually easiest trail—for each mountain. Instead, he undertook the same arduous process for every possible path on a given fourteener (and, starting in 2004, on thirteeners for 13ers.com, which he merged with 14ers.com in 2015). In some cases, that meant hiking, photographing, and then crafting as many as eight different route descriptions for one peak.

Not only was Middlebrook continuously adding or updating, but he was also enhancing the user experience by posting complementary content (about the easiest mountains for beginners and suggested gear) and offering critical tools (like digital topo maps), all of which was available to anyone who simply keyed in the URL. To access some sections of the site, however, Middlebrook began requiring visitors to create free logins in 2005. By compelling people to fashion usernames and giving them the ability to fill out a checklist of summits they’d tagged, Middlebrook gave rise to something that was arguably as valuable as his route descriptions: a community.

AT 8:31 P.M. ON MAY 6, 2007, colopilot2002 created the first post in a thread titled “Climber injured and stranded on Humbolt Peak” on 14ers.com’s forum. Along with a link to a 9News story, colopilot2002 mentioned that the unnamed 38-year-old climber was stuck somewhere above 12,000 feet. Nineteen minutes later, sdkeil responded: “Hmmmm I hope this isn’t what I think it is about. USAKeller and TalusMonkey went to climb Humbolt this weekend. I think TalusMonkey is 38 and neither are answering their cell phones. Let us all hope for the best.”

Over the next three days, 497 posts told the story of a community that would lose one of its own in David Worthington. A glissading mishap led to catastrophic injuries and a night spent in the elements above timberline, despite the best efforts of Caroline Moore, aka USAKeller, to descend quickly and find help. When a search-and-rescue operation reached the climber alive the next day and asked him his name, Worthington didn’t say “David.” Instead, he whispered, “TalusMonkey.” He died that night at a hospital in Pueblo.

On that heart-wrenching weekend in 2007, the 14ers.com forum gave Colorado’s hiking set a place to deliver and receive updates, offer assistance, tell stories, and grieve. It did the same when 24-year-old Rob Jansen, aka rjansen77, died in a rockslide on Hagerman Peak in August 2012. That same month, the site helped create a happier ending for another injured soul, this one a German shepherd that had been abandoned on Mt. Bierstadt. By coordinating a rescue operation on the forum, 14ers.com users saved the pup.

“Bill has brought a lot of people together,” says Ryan Richardson, who found so many hiking-partners-turned-friends at 14ers.com happy hours in Denver that he began coordinating similar meetups in Boulder. Richardson also serves as a volunteer administrator on 14ers.com’s nearly 80,000-strong Facebook page so Middlebrook—who’s not a fan of the trolls on Meta’s site—can focus on 14ers.com.

Although the Facebook page is often a haunt for newbie hikers, 14ers.com caters to peak baggers of all experience levels. Even expert mountaineers can mine for beta gold on Middlebrook’s pages, particularly in the trip reports and peak conditions sections, where registered users can post narratives detailing their adventures or offer quick-hit notes about how much snow is still on a given trail on a late-summer day. “I love seeing reports from someone who’s ahead of me on the checklists,” says Brad McQueen, who has summited all of the state’s fourteeners and is now chasing the thirteeners. “If wildwanderer has done a peak, I read the report. I know it’s gonna be good.”

More experienced climbers like McQueen also help Middlebrook in his mission to keep hikers safe, especially on the state’s most treacherous peaks. In 2017, when five hikers died on Capitol Peak near Aspen, McQueen soloed the mountain the following summer to try to pinpoint where people were getting off-route—and falling to their deaths. “I figured out one of the problem areas, I think,” says McQueen, who went home and wrote up a trip report to warn prospective hikers. “There’s a gully that looks like a shortcut down to the lake, but it’s a death trap. Hikers cliff out with 800-foot drops below them.”

Middlebrook updated the site’s Capitol Peak route description with similar language, but that 14,138-foot massif isn’t the only troublemaker. “There are just certain routes that require me to look for something that is causing so

CONTINUED ON PAGE 142

DENVER'S TOP

Keep your mouth happy with *5280*'s comprehensive list of more than 900 of the best dentists in Denver and beyond.

2025

DENTISTS

THE PROCESS

How we come up with the Top Dentists list.

This list is pulled from the 2025 topDentists database, which is created using peer evaluations and includes listings for more than 900 dentists and specialists in Colorado. To create its list, topDentists asked dentists and specialists a personal question: “If you had a patient in need of a dentist, which dentist would you refer him or her to?” The nomination pool comprised all active dentists listed online with the American Dental Association as well as with dental academies and societies. (Dentists could also nominate others who may not be on those lists.) Respondents were asked to consider experience, continuing education, manner with patients, use of new techniques and technologies, and physical results. After the responses were compiled, dentists were checked against state dental boards for disciplinary actions to make sure they have active licenses and are in good standing. We realize there are many fine dentists who are not on this list; a dentist’s inclusion is based on the subjective judgments of fellow dentists. For more information, visit usatopdentists.com.

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PAGE 78

Manages pain and anxiety during oral surgery or other dental procedures using general and/or local anesthesia

ENDODONTICS

PAGE 78

Treats issues related to nerves and the inner portions of the tooth; root canals are a common procedure

GENERAL DENTISTRY

PAGE 79

Performs preventive dental care and basic upkeep of teeth, including cleanings and X-rays

ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

PAGE 152

Removes impacted teeth (such as wisdom teeth) and performs reconstructive surgeries, like rebuilding broken jaws

ORAL MEDICINE

PAGE 154

Identifies and treats disorders of the mouth like ulcers and growths and performs nonsurgical procedures

ORTHODONTICS

PAGE 154

Modifies bites or coaxes unruly teeth into alignment using braces and other devices

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

PAGE 156

Provides therapeutic and preventive care for kids

PERIODONTICS

PAGE 158

Specializes in the periodontium, or supporting tooth structure, and treats gum disease and receding gums

PROSTHODONTICS

PAGE 159

Deals with dentures, dental implants, and bridges as well as complex crown work

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In a world where corporate dentistry is on the rise, Drs. Yaros, Sun, Augustine, and Zeppelin are committed to protecting the legacy of a doctor-owned practice **where you are treated like family.**

We don't believe in a one-size-fits-all approach. Instead, we take the time to understand your unique needs, combining the latest in dental technology with a personal touch. Whether it's a routine check-up or a life-changing smile makeover, our goal is always the same: to give you the best care possible, designed around you.

At Aspenwood, you're not just a patient, you're part of the family.
And family deserves the best.

GENERAL DENTISTRY

GOLDEN DENTAL SOLUTIONS

DALLAS KENSON, DDS

4 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S. from University of Michigan
Member of ADA, CDA, MDDS, AADSM

EVELYN QI, DMD

DR. ANDREA LEUNG

Did you know that the WAY you breathe can increase your risk of gingivitis and increase your blood pressure? Did you know that the way your teeth fit together can determine how much enamel wear you'll have in the future? Did you know that many of the chronic illnesses we as adults suffer from are easily preventable by developing the dental arches while children are young?

These are just a few items we discuss during your exam to ensure the opportunity for you to achieve optimal oral health. Our patients are well-informed and seek the best care in a friendly, comfortable environment. We treat general dentistry needs, children's development, headaches, and so much more.

GOLDEN DENTAL SOLUTIONS

1218 Arapahoe Street
Golden, CO 80401
303.277.9600
WWW.MYGOLDENDENTIST.COM

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

CENTERS FOR ORAL AND RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGERY

ASHRAF SEDHOM, BDS, MD

13 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

MARK GLASGOW, DDS

ELBERT CHOI, DDS

MATT STEUER, DDS

The Center for Oral and Reconstructive Surgery and Implantology, founded in 2002 by Dr. Ashraf W. Sedhom, was established with the vision of delivering exceptional care to every patient. Our team is dedicated to providing first-class services with board-certified surgeons who bring over 80 years of combined experience. We take pride in our education and expertise, as our team members have both dental and medical training, specializing in all aspects of oral and maxillofacial surgery. We operate across three area hospitals, ensuring that our patients receive compassionate and comprehensive care. Dr. Sedhom, with unwavering dedication, also provides essential surgical services free of charge to those in urgent need.

Oral Surgery Center

LAKEWOOD
7373 W. Jefferson Ave. Suite 102, Lakewood, CO 80235
303.936.5922

THORNTON
2200 E. 104th Ave.
Thornton, CO 80233
303.255.1077

AURORA
11246 E. Mississippi Ave.
Aurora, CO 80012
303.344.0810

WWW.ORALSURGERYCENTER.COM

Our mission is simple:
to help you Live Life Smiling.

As a Board-Certified Orthodontist, Dr. Isaac is passionately committed to providing personalized orthodontic treatment for pediatric, adolescent, and adult patients that redefines quality care.

Our goal at i-Orthodontics is to instill confidence in patients through beautiful smiles.

Come discover how you can
LIVE LIFE SMILING.

Isaac D. Chung, D.M.D.
Board-Certified Orthodontist

i ORTHODONTICS

LONE TREE | CHERRY CREEK | AURORA
303 662 9000 | i-ORTHO.COM

ORTHODONTICS

KARLIN ORTHODONTICS

DR. TYLER KARLIN

12 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Karlin is a Board-certified orthodontist and Diamond Invisalign provider who has brought orthodontic excellence and beautiful smiles to Highlands Ranch and surrounding communities for over 15 years. His down-to-earth personality and relaxed style make him an ideal practitioner for young children, adolescents, and adults. Dr. Karlin and his team pride themselves on their intimate and fun office environment, and they strive to make a positive difference in the lives of patients and their families. Consistently positive reviews and testimonials for Karlin Orthodontics reflect the quality results and the strong relationships we have built with our patients.

KARLIN ORTHODONTICS

9305 Dorchester Street
Suite 103
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
303.470.9488
WWW.KARLINORTHODONTICS.COM
/KarlinOrthodontics

JULIANA DIPASQUALE, DMD
15 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

KEVIN M. PATTERSON, DDS, MD
16 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DENVER METRO ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

We are honored and thankful to be recognized by our professional colleagues as 5280 Top dentists.

At Denver Metro OMS, we are devoted to delivering exemplary surgical care with a focus on compassion, precision, and patient well-being. Our mission is to provide comprehensive oral, facial, and dental implant surgery, utilizing cutting-edge techniques and state-of-the-art technology. We are committed to the highest standards of professionalism, ensuring each patient receives personalized, top-tier treatment tailored to their unique needs. Please call our office so that our skilled team can assist you ~ 303.321.0333.

DENVER METRO OMS
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGEONS

4500 Cherry Creek Drive South, Suite 410 • Glendale, CO 80246
303.321.0333 • www.dmoms.com

For 23 years, Dr. Keith J. Kohrs has been creating confident, healthy smiles. His dedication to excellence has earned him recognition as a *5280 Magazine* Top Dentist for 18 consecutive years, a testament to his commitment to quality care, advanced technology, and a patient-first approach. With locations in Aurora, Bennett, Strasburg, and Firestone, Kohrs Orthodontics makes it easy to access top-tier orthodontic care. Utilizing cutting-edge technology and offering customized treatment and flexible financial options, they ensure every patient achieves the best possible results.

At the heart of Kohrs Orthodontics is a team committed to making every orthodontic journey seamless and enjoyable. From the first consultation to the final reveal, they provide expert guidance and support at every step. Dr. Kohrs and his team go beyond braces and aligners, focusing on personalized treatment plans designed to enhance confidence and improve overall oral health. With the latest orthodontic innovations and a welcoming, supportive environment, every patient receives exceptional, tailored care.

Beyond orthodontics, Dr. Kohrs is a dedicated community advocate. As a member of the Kaiser Permanente craniofacial team, he provides specialized care for children with craniofacial conditions like cleft lip and palate. The practice also actively supports local charities, educational programs, and community events, reinforcing the belief that a strong community starts with healthy, confident smiles.

Schedule your FREE consultation today! Visit KohrsOrtho.com and experience the innovation, compassion, and expert care that have made them a trusted name in orthodontics for over two decades.

ORTHODONTICS

KOHRS ORTHODONTICS

KEITH J. KOHRS, DDS

18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

5280 Top Dentist 2008 – 2025; DDS, Case Western Reserve University; Orthodontic Residency, Oregon Health & Sciences University; Provider for Kaiser Permanente's Cleft Palate Team

KOHRS ORTHODONTICS

AURORA-WEST
2900 S. Peoria Street, Suite B, Aurora, CO 80014

AURORA-EAST
18860 E. Hampden Avenue, Aurora, CO 80013

STRASBURG
56620 E. Colfax Avenue, Strasburg, CO 80136

BENNETT
250 E. Colfax Avenue, Bennett, CO 80102

FIRESTONE
4275 City Centre Road, Suite 400, Firestone, CO 80504

303.750.3660 | **WWW.KOHRSORTHO.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

GROUT FAMILY DENTISTRY

DR. JEFFREY B. GROUT 12 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. MEGAN KACK 1 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Friendly. Caring. Empathetic. Honest. Exceptionally qualified. These are a genuine reflection of our dedication to education, satisfaction, open communication, and patient-focused care in the South Littleton area since 1971.

GROUT FAMILY DENTISTRY
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8 W. Dry Creek Circle, Suite 101
Littleton, CO 80120 | 303.730.1222
WWW.GROUTFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

METROPOLITAN DENTAL CARE

MAUREEN ROACH, DMD 18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

ROY KALUZSHNER, DMD

ARTEMIS KHAZAIE, DDS

We have a talented and caring staff who is committed to providing compassionate and quality care in a warm and welcoming environment. We recognize that earning our patients' trust has allowed us to serve the downtown and greater Denver area for over 40 years.

Metropolitan Dental Care
Helping Generations Smile

1400 Glenarm Place, Suite 200, Denver, CO 80202
303.534.2626 | **WWW.METRODENTALCARE.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

METRO SMILES PC

ROBIN ASBURY, DDS 17 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Reveal Your Best Smile with No Prep Veneers!

- *Preserve your enamel*—no drilling, no stress.
- *Enhance your smile*—a natural, youthful transformation.
- *Boost your confidence*—flash your smile with pride.
- *Empower your dental health*—a minimal process with maximum impact.

Dr. Robin, recognized in *5280* magazine's Top Dentists (2009-2025), offers Invisalign®, Botox® for clenching and gummy smiles, Zoom® Whitening, metal-free fillings and natural-looking crowns. **Schedule your consultation today for the smile you deserve!**

Metro Smiles PC

8200 E. Belleview Avenue, Suite 460E
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
303.768.8443 | **WWW.SMILESBYDRROBIN.COM**

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ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

CHERRY CREEK ORAL SURGERY

JOHN R. NESIBA, MD, DDS 4 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Denver's Triple-Board-Certified Surgeon: American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, American Board of Cosmetic Surgery, & American Board of Facial Cosmetic Surgery.

Dr. Nesiba founded Cherry Creek Oral Surgery in August 2020, bringing a unique perspective shaped by his own experiences as a patient. Having undergone multiple head and neck surgeries for salivary gland cancer prior to dental school, he acknowledges the emotional and physical aspects of recovery. His extensive training in head and neck trauma, reconstruction, and full-body cosmetic surgery sculpts his surgical approach. In addition to standard oral surgery procedures, Dr. Nesiba offers additional treatments, including facial cosmetic surgery, PRP/PRF, laser skin resurfacing, Botox, and dermal fillers. As a privately owned and locally operated practice, Cherry Creek Oral Surgery offers boutique-style care with a personalized touch. Dr. Nesiba also owns and operates Flourish Surgical Arts, where he offers full-body cosmetic surgery, ensuring exceptional results with an artistic approach.

cherry creek
ORAL SURGERY

3955 E. Exposition Avenue, Suite 520
Denver, CO 80209 | 303.777.1603
WWW.CHERRYCREEKORALSURGERY.COM

PROSTHODONTICS

BRIDGECREEK PROSTHETIC DENTISTRY

DR. BRIAN BUTLER 18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. DENNIS WAGUESPACK
11 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. AARON BELLIS 1 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Prosthodontics is a dental specialty focusing on the restoration or replacement of damaged or missing teeth with crowns, bridges, dental implants and dentures. We also provide treatment for oral cancer with necessary appliances before and after surgery. We pride ourselves on providing quality dentistry, built from more than 35 years of combined experience in Denver. We work with many of the finest general practitioners and dental specialists to restore lost function and esthetics, whether it is a single tooth or a full-mouth reconstruction.

BridgeCreek Prosthetic Dentistry, L.L.C.

8751 E. Hampden Avenue
Suite C6, Denver, CO 80231
303.755.4003

3955 E. Exposition Avenue
Suite 410, Denver, CO 80209
303.722.7227

WWW.BRIDGECREEKDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DR. GREG KEENE

18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We are proud to be celebrating our 25th year practicing as a sole practitioner! Dr. Greg Keene realizes that a beautiful, healthy smile boosts his patients' confidence and promotes self-esteem. That is why he focuses on providing optimal dental care in a comfortable setting. Customer safety is the #1 priority before you even enter the building. Their office is keeping you safe and healthy. "We take the time to develop relationships with our patients and have fun doing it," says Dr. Keene. Dr. Keene has been providing high-end cosmetics and dental implants for years and is ready to welcome you to Keene Smiles.

255 W. South Boulder Road, Lafayette, CO 80026
303.665.5586 | **WWW.KEENESMILES.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

HOLLY DENTAL ASSOCIATES

KURT E. NIELSEN, DDS **10** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

LANDIS C. SCHOLES, DDS **9** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We are dedicated to making you feel at home in a comfortable and stress-free environment. Our goal is to deliver quality care in an affordable and timely manner, using the latest technological advances in dentistry. Your needs and best interests are our priority.

8010 S. Holly Street, Suite 100, Centennial, CO 80122
303.694.6400 | **WWW.HOLLYDENTAL.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DR. SUSAN KUTIS

15 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

University of Illinois School of Dentistry, University of Colorado General Practice Residency, American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry, President and Board Member of MDDS, Dawson Academy Alumni, Spear Study Club, American Dental Association, and Colorado Dental Association

Dr. Susan Kutis is humbled to have received the Top Dentist award since 2012, in both Denver and Chicago. This recognition stems from her compassionate care, combined with endless hours spent on continuing education in order to provide her patients with the latest dental techniques in cosmetic and comprehensive care.

BLUE SAGE DENTAL

10354 W. Chatfield Ave., Ste. 100, Littleton, CO 80127
303-973-1112 | **WWW.BLUESAGEDENTAL.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

GB DENTAL ASSOCIATES

DR. NATHANIEL KUNZMAN

1 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Nathaniel Kunzman is a highly esteemed dentist with expertise in general dentistry, dental implants, and leadership in the healthcare field. He is an active member of organizations like the Academy of General Dentistry and the American Dental Association. Passionate about community service, Dr. Kunzman has served on the board of directors for the Colorado Mission of Mercy, providing free dental care to underserved populations. Recognized for his technical mastery and dedication to mentoring, he consistently strives to uplift his profession. Dr. Kunzman's career reflects a commitment to improving lives while maintaining a legacy of excellence in dentistry and a deep belief in giving back to the community.

Dental Associates P.C.

1910 56th Avenue
Greeley, CO 80634
970.339.9770
WWW.GREELEYTEETH.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

GOLDEN HILL FAMILY DENTISTRY

DR. GRACE RUDERSDORF

2 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Golden Hill Family Dentistry is a woman-owned private practice dedicated to comprehensive care for the whole family. We offer cosmetic dentistry, TMJ therapy, airway-focused care, implants, orthodontics and most general dentistry procedures. Our approach goes beyond just teeth—we treat the whole person using the latest technology at an affordable cost while being in-network with several insurances.

Dr. Rudersdorf graduated from Creighton University School of Dentistry in 2014 and acquired Golden Hill Family Dentistry in 2017. Throughout her career she has committed to ongoing education through Spear, Kois, and Global Diagnosis Education as well as the American Academy of Craniofacial Pain. She has completed mini residencies through the American Academy of Implant Dentistry and Progressive Orthodontic Seminars and is a proud member of the American Dental Association, Academy of General Dentistry, Colorado Dental Association and Metropolitan Denver Dentist Society.

11290 W. Alameda Ave., Ste. 100, Lakewood, CO 80226
303.237.1553 | **WWW.SMILE-WITH-GRACE.COM**

PERIODONTICS

MOUNTAIN TOP PERIODONTICS & IMPLANTS

DR. ADAM WEAVER **17** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

A Top Dentist since 2009, with 25 years of experience, Dr. Weaver stays on top of the latest treatment options and technology. Dr. Weaver is a certified Pinhole Gum Surgery Specialist. He practices advanced Periodontal Plastic Surgery and computer-guided implant technology. He works with the best dentists in Colorado to provide comprehensive dental treatment options.

8000 E. Prentice Ave., Ste. D7
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
303.740.0080
WWW.MTPERIO.COM

3920 N. Union Blvd., Ste. 380
Colorado Springs, CO 80907
719.594.0091
WWW.MYPERIOCARE.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

CHELSEA FREIBERG, DMD

5 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Freiberg owns a true general family practice in her hometown with an innovative in-house lab. Her family has served the dental community since 1954. She is passionate about providing excellent dental care and accommodating her patients' needs. She is dedicated to her continuing education in restorative and implant dentistry.

FREIBERG FAMILY DENTISTRY

255 Union Boulevard, Suite 495
Lakewood, CO 80228 | 303.989.1423
WWW.FREIBERGFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

GENERATIONS FAMILY & COSMETIC DENTISTRY

DR. LINDSAY COMPTON

4 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We enjoy treating all patients who seek exceptional dental care in a warm, friendly atmosphere. This philosophy establishes a trusting relationship between us and our patients. We are committed to providing a welcoming, comfortable environment for all patients we treat, regardless of their dental condition.

GENERATIONS FAMILY & COSMETIC DENTISTRY

8595 Ralston Road, Arvada, CO 80002
303.421.2131
WWW.ARVADADENTIST.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

HIGHLANDS RANCH FAMILY DENTISTRY

ELIZABETH MCINERNEY, D.D.S

5 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

ERIC T. RYSNER, D.D.S

17 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We are honored and humbled to be recognized as a *5280* Top Dentist for the 17th consecutive year! We are a true family practice—Dr. McInerney, Dr. Rysner's niece, joined the team in 2018. We share the same treatment philosophy, emphasizing the highest level of patient care in a technology rich environment. We are proud to be leaders with CEREC Primescan digital CAD/CAM which minimizes your time in our office. In just one visit, we can treat, repair, and improve your smile with incredible precision. For your comfort, we offer TVs and headphones during treatment in a relaxing atmosphere. We love being dentists as it lets our family provide your family with personal, honest, professional, and long-term care.

Highlands Ranch Family Dentistry

541 W. Highlands Ranch Parkway, Suite 101
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
303.346.1118 | **WWW.HRFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM**

OHMART ORTHODONTICS

OHMART ORTHODONTICS

DR. SCOTT W. OHMART
DR. THERESA SHAVER

Creating smiles to last a lifetime since 1994.

5280 TOP ORTHODONTIST 2008–2025

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PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

5280 PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

DR. CRAIG OWENS 6 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. DEREK OWENS 6 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. SHANELLE FARAHI

At 5280 Pediatric Dentistry, we strive to make every dental visit fun for both the patient and their parents. With 24 years of combined experience, we are brothers, native to Colorado, who are committed to treating your family as if it were our own.

11960 Lioness Way, Suite 170, Parker, CO 80134
303.601.5280 | **WWW.5280PEDIATRICDENTISTRY.COM**

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

DR. REBECCA GOLDBERG

6 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Rebecca is a board-certified pediatric dentist committed to providing quality care and education to her patients. The team emphasizes establishing long-term relationships with patients and contributing to the local community. Dr. Rebecca's jungle-themed practice creates a fun, memorable atmosphere. They utilize cutting-edge laser technology to get rid of "cavity-causing sugar bugs." Her team can't wait to meet you and help keep your smiles healthy.

2975 Roslyn Street, Suite 160, Denver, CO 80238
720.945.1234 | **WWW.AWILDSMILE.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

ALBION AESTHETIC DENTISTRY

LYNDSEY THERIOT, DDS 1 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Lyndsey Theriot is dedicated to transforming the dental experience with her patient-first philosophy. She takes the time to learn each patient's goals, concerns, and preferences to provide personalized treatment. Combining evidence-based dentistry with the latest technology, Dr. Lyndsey ensures every patient receives exceptional care.

1660 S Albion Street, Suite 715
Denver, CO 80222
303.758.4287 | **WWW.ALBIONDENTISTRY.COM**

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

ROCKY MOUNTAIN ORAL AND MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

MICHAEL ROLLERT, DDS, FAACS

18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Personalized care you won't find anywhere else.

Rocky Mountain Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery has been committed to serving the Denver metropolitan community for more than 25 years. When it comes to picking an oral surgeon, we know that you have options. Quality, gentle, comprehensive patient care is our number one priority.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

DENVER TECH CENTER
CENTENNIAL |THORNTON
720.452.2144
WWW.ROCKYMOUNTAINOMS.COM

Colorado Smile Design

GENERAL DENTISTRY

COLORADO SMILE DESIGN

DR. PHILIP WIMPEE

16 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Phil Wimpee founded Colorado Smile Design in 1990 with the primary goal of providing the highest quality dental care in the most comfortable setting possible. Today, Dr. Wimpee and the team achieve that goal in a state-of-the-art facility, using the latest cutting-edge technology. We always focus on patients first. We are proud to be individually owned and not one of the huge, impersonal corporate offices that have become all too common. Thirty-five years after its beginning, Colorado Smile Design is a unique place where the entire team strives to provide the latest in advanced dentistry with genuine friendliness and care.

COLORADO
SMILE DESIGN
Philip E Wimpee, DDS, PC

9135 S. Ridgeline Boulevard
Suite 120
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
303.979.2900
WWW.COLORADOSMILEDESIGN.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

BELMAR DENTISTRY

DR. KELLY THOMPSON

7 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Thompson provides patient-first, collaborative, comprehensive, and compassionate dental care. She is passionate about understanding patient priorities and providing education for clients in order to create a tailored oral health care plan. At Belmar Dentistry, the entire team works to ensure a relaxed and comfortable environment while providing our patients with excellent care in general, restorative, preventative, emergency dentistry, and oral surgery.

BELMAR DENTISTRY

15 Wadsworth Boulevard
Lakewood, CO 80226 | 303.936.3700
WWW.BELMARDENTISTRY.COM

ENDODONTICS

BELMAR ENDODONTICS

DR. MICHAEL B. MCKEE **12** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S., University of Colorado School of Dentistry
Endodontic Residency, University of Pennsylvania

What makes Belmar Endodontics exceptional is the combination of Dr. McKee's years of endodontic experience, his calm and communicative style, along with our passion for providing personalized, state-of-the-art quality care, in a warm and professional environment. We strive to exceed the expectations of our patients and referring doctors.

BELMAR ENDODONTICS

550 S. Wadsworth Boulevard, Suite 160
Lakewood, CO 80226 | (303) 922-ENDO (3636)
WWW.BELMARENDO.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

JACLYNN SPENCER, DDS

15 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S. from University of Colorado School of Dentistry Member, 5280 Study Club, Volunteer for Colorado Mission of Mercy

Brighton Smiles has been providing outstanding dentistry in the community since 2003. Leading-edge technology allows Dr. Jaci and her team to combine beauty and function in dentistry. Comprehensive education, combined with a caring touch, makes Brighton Smiles a wonderful place for family check-ups, as well as complex cosmetic dental needs. Schedule an appointment today.

JACLYNN SPENCER D.D.S. BRIGHTON SMILES PC FAMILY DENTISTRY

30 South 20th Avenue, Suite D, Brighton, CO 80601
303.659.3062 | **WWW.BRIGHTONSMILES.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

TWIN ASPEN DENTAL CENTER

DR. BRIAN RICHTER 5 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Texas A&M University; Oregon Health and Sciences University, DMD

Dr. Richter is honored to be recognized as a Top Dentist in the South Denver community, a testament to his unwavering commitment to providing exceptional dental care—with a focus on patient comfort, and customized solutions for every smile. With years of expertise and a passion for patient well-being, Dr. Richter and his team, including Dr. Alyssa Mughal and Dr. Brendan Reich, continuously strive to stay at the forefront of the latest advancements in dentistry. Whether you need routine care, want cosmetic enhancements, or you need restorative solutions, the team at Twin Aspen Dental will tailor treatment to your wants and needs. This esteemed recognition reflects not only their clinical skill but also the trust and satisfaction of the many patients they serve.

Discover why Twin Aspen Dental Center is South Denver's trusted name in dentistry!

Twin Aspen Dental Center

19572 Stroh Road, Parker, CO 80134
303.841.7466
WWW.TWINASPENDENTALCENTER.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

THE STUDIO FOR EXCEPTIONAL DENTISTRY

DR. ANDREW HALL 2 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Bachelor of Science, Florida Southern College; Doctor of Dental Medicine, University of Florida College of Dentistry; Advanced Education in General Dentistry, Tripler Army Medical Center

Dr. Andrew Hall's passion is transforming lives through exceptional cosmetic dentistry in Colorado Springs. He believes a beautiful smile unlocks confidence and well-being, positively impacting lives. Deeply passionate about smile enhancement, he combines artistry and advanced techniques for natural, life-changing results. His global experience and advanced training, including CEREC and Invisalign, allow him to offer diverse solutions. At The Studio for Exceptional Dentistry, he prioritizes patient comfort and informed choices. Dr. Hall's commitment to crafting beautiful smiles remains his unwavering priority.

THE STUDIO FOR EXCEPTIONAL DENTISTRY

13453 Voyager Parkway,
Colorado Springs, CO 80921
719.481.8250
WWW.DRANDREWHALL.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DR. KARLYN TAYLOR

8 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S. with Honors from University of Washington, 2008
General Practice Residency at University of Colorado, 2010

Our team sets us apart. From the first smile that greets you on arrival, to our highly skilled and compassionate dentist, you will know that you are a valued patient. We love developing long-term relationships with our patients.

CENTRAL PARK DENTAL

2373 Central Park Boulevard, Suite 304
Denver, CO 80238
303.388.2400
WWW.CENTRALPARKDENTALDENVER.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

CHATEAUX FAMILY & COSMETIC DENTISTRY

DR. BRANDI BOTTOMS **14** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Voted a Top Dentist since 2009, with 17 years of experience, Dr. Bottoms provides compassionate care with a gentle touch. At Chateaux Dental, we believe in giving our patients a relaxed, caring, and friendly experience. We pride ourselves on providing comprehensive and preventative care, including implant restorations and esthetic dentistry. Offering Botox, Juvederm, laser treatments, same-day crowns, and Invisalign!

Chateaux Family & Cosmetic Dentistry

13606 Xavier Lane, Suite F, Broomfield, CO 80023
303.465.4500 | **WWW.CHATEAUXDENTAL.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

CHERRY CREEK DENTAL SPA

DR. MELISSA GOODPASTER **6** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Melissa Goodpaster crafted a vision to provide the highest quality dental care in an elegant and tranquil spa-like environment. Her thoughtful concept has successfully alleviated many fears and misconceptions around visiting the dentist and created a unique experience that doesn't feel like a dental office at all.

Cherry Creek

155 S. Madison Street, Suite 220
Denver, CO 80209 | 303.835.0033
WWW.CHERRYCREEKDENTALSPA.COM

PEDIATRIC, ORTHODONTICS, & GENERAL DENTISTRY

SOUTHWEST PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY & ORTHODONTICS

DR. R. SCOTT PANKRATZ 13
DR. MATTHEW GOERGEN 4
DR. CHAD BELONGEA 8

13 8 4 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Going to the dentist should be a welcoming and comfortable experience. That's why Drs. Scott Pankratz, Matt Goergen, Chad Belongea, and the team work hard to provide a friendly, upbeat atmosphere to help you feel at home during your visit to our office.

At Southwest Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics and Southwest Adult Dentistry, we believe that the relationship between dentist and patient should be built on mutual trust, respect, and friendship. We get to know our patients and want you to feel like family. We can't wait to welcome you to your new dental home!

pediatric dentistry
& orthodontics p.c.
southwest
adult dentistry

6931 S. Pierce Street, Littleton, CO 80128
303.978.1104
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GENERAL DENTISTRY

DR. CHRIS J. DUMAS

10 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S. from University of Missouri-Kansas City
General Practice Residency, Truman Medical Center-Lakewood
Fellow, Academy of General Dentistry

Dr. Dumas takes the time necessary to focus on the treatment that is right for each individual patient. His attention to detail and concern for the overall health and well-being of his patients is second to none! We are currently welcoming new patients into our practice, and we look forward to meeting you and your family.

CHRIS J DUMAS DDS, PC
COMPREHENSIVE AND COSMETIC DENTISTRY

6900 E. Belleview Avenue, Suite 203
Greenwood Village, CO 80111
303.796.8668 | **WWW.DRDUMAS.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

CITY CENTER DENTAL GROUP

JUSTIN PEARSON, DDS **10** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

SAHEL KHORSHIDIAN, DDS **4** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We are excited to announce our new office location by Swedish Hospital on South Clarkson. A state-of-the-art new space, same high quality, comprehensive focus. It is a pleasure yet again to be nominated for this prestigious award!

City Center Dental Group of Englewood

3601 S. Clarkson Street, Suite 400
Englewood, CO 80113 | 303.744.5000
WWWW.CITYCENTERDENTALGROUP.COM

COLORADO ORAL SURGERY

Central Park
P 303.955.5587 F 303.955.5596
2373 Central Park Blvd, Suite 301
Denver, CO 80238

Cherry Creek
P 303.744.1369 F 303.744.9879
Wells Fargo Professional Bldg
400 S Colorado Blvd, Suite 450
Denver, CO 80246

Parker
P 303.699.0351 F 720.536.3581
17167 Cedar Gulch Parkway, Suite 100
Parker, CO 80134

Gregg L. Lurcott, DDS • Michael A. Hale, DDS • Aaron T. Liddell, MD, DMD, FACS
Matthew K. Alleman, DMD, FACS • Travis J. Hamilton, MD, DMD

Diplomates, American Board of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Extractions • Implant Surgery • Lesion & Tumor Management • TMJ Orthognathic Surgery • Reconstructive Surgery • Trauma Surgery

coloradooralsurgery.com

PERIODONTICS

COLORADO PERIODONTAL ASSOCIATES

DR. JOSEPH K. WILL 18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. MADELINE SAUNDERS 9 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

The focus of our practice is to incorporate the latest technologies and science to first educate, then treat, our patients. This includes a dedication to providing a relaxed environment so that we can reach the desires of our patients comfortably. From the receptionist to the doctors, we maintain a great attitude that we hope will spread to our patients.

COLORADO PERIODONTAL ASSOCIATES

10050 W. 41st Avenue, Suite 201
Wheat Ridge, CO 80033 | 303.232.3443
WWW.COLORADOPERIOIMPLANTS.COM

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

COLORADO REGIONAL ORAL SURGERY

NICHOLAS A. POLITANO, D.D.S. 13
SARA A. WEINSTEIN, D.D.S. 10
ERIC J. REIMER, D.D.S.

13 10 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Colorado Regional Oral Surgery has been dedicated to providing outstanding comprehensive clinical patient care for over four decades. As you look for a trusted oral and maxillofacial surgery practice, we look forward to working with you using our patient-centered care model.

Colorado Regional Oral Surgery

ARVADA
303.431.0033

LAKEWOOD
303.727.8595

WWW.COREGIONALOS.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

COLORADO TONGUE TIE

DR. CHAD FRUITHANDLER 2 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

At Colorado Tongue Tie, we are committed to educating and treating individuals with tethered oral tissues (TOTs). With compassionate, personalized care, we support patients of all ages—infants to adults—ensuring a comfortable and effective treatment experience.

COLORADO TONGUE TIE

4704 Harlan Street, Suite 350
Denver, CO 80212
720.507.0077
WWW.COLORADOTONGUETIE.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

COLORADO WELLNESS DENTISTRY

DR. MITCHELL WILLIAMS 1 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

As a fourth-generation Colorado native, I seek to treat patients for their whole-body health and wellness like I do for my own family. My office is unique, and I offer many services other providers do not provide. Treatment is personalized for each individual patient.

9085 E. Mineral Circle, Suite 220
Centennial, CO , 80112 | 303.798.1068
WWW.COLORADOWELLNESSDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DR. DAWN WEHKING

11 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Accredited, American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry
Master, Academy of General Dentistry
B.S., Molecular and Microbiology, University of Central Florida D.D.S., University of Maryland School of Dentistry

You'll notice a difference when you visit our office. Our team will listen to your needs and ease your fears. Whether your visit is for a dental checkup or you're starting on the path to a smile makeover, we will make sure you feel comfortable along the way. While our office is a house, our goal is that after you visit, you'll feel it's a home.

204 E. Baseline Road, Lafayette, CO 80026
303.665.4000 | **WWW.DENTISTLAFAYETTE.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DENTISTRY AT GOLDEN RIDGE

DR. JAMIE RICHARD 6 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. CHRISTINA VERSCHAVE

9 *5280* Top Dentist 2014-2022

Dr. Jamie Richard and Dr. Christina VerSchave practice in their state-of-the-art dental office in beautiful Golden, Colorado. Through a strong focus on patient-specific, comprehensive care, incorporating the most innovative technology, and excelling in continuing education, Team Dentistry at Golden Ridge will provide you with elite, quality care!

755 Heritage Road, Suite 120, Golden, CO 80401
303.395.3333 | **WWW.DENTISTRYGOLDENRIDGE.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DENVER TECH DENTISTRY

DR. DANIEL SELNER 18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. ANDREA TAYLOR 17 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. KYLE GRIFFITH 11 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Denver Tech Dentistry has been serving the Denver community for over 55 years. Our collaborative approach insures that each patient receives the highest-quality, personalized care that encompasses a focus on enhancing their overall dental health and appearance.

8181 E. Tufts Avenue, Suite 550, Denver, CO 80237
720.488.9090 | **WWW.DENVERTECHDENTISTRY.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DOVE VALLEY DENTISTRY

DR. DAWN AUSTIN 16 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dove Valley Dentistry is a beautiful, modern, private practice where Dr. Austin prioritizes her patients' overall well-being. She and her team are dedicated to providing a personalized, high-quality experience at every visit.

Dove Valley DENTISTRY
DAWN AUSTIN, DDS

15500 East Broncos Parkway, Suite F
Centennial, CO 80112
720.638.8131
WWW.DOVEVALLEYDENTISTRY.COM

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

DRY CREEK ORAL SURGERY

DR. JEREMY JANNUZZI 11 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. JULIA R. PLEVNIA 10 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. DANIEL ESCALANTE 5 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We are proud of our long history of compassionate care and thorough patient education. We offer a wide range of procedures, including wisdom teeth removal, dental implants, bone grafting, corrective jaw surgery, and facial cosmetics. Call us today to get started!

Dry Creek Oral Surgery
Denver Tech Center • Parker

DENVER TECH CENTER
303.773.8228

PARKER
303.840.2300

WWW.DRYCREEKORALSURGERY.COM

ORTHODONTICS

DR. NICOLE EBERLE

13 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S. from University of Iowa; B.A. from Northwestern University;
Orthodontic Residency and M.S. at University of Iowa;
Board Certified Diplomate of the American Board of Orthodontics

Dr. Eberle is a board-certified orthodontist who takes pride in her personalized approach to orthodontic treatment. She believes that beautiful, healthy smiles are possible for all ages. Whether kids or adults, braces or Invisalign, Eberle Orthodontics is a family-friendly environment where everyone knows your name.

eberle | orthodontics
Nicole E Eberle, DDS, MS

55 Madison Street, Suite 280
Denver, CO 80206 | 303.320.0307
WWW.SMILESBYEBERLE.COM

ENDODONTICS

ENDODONTICS OF CHERRY CREEK & DTC

SCOTT M. MALONEY, DMD, MS 17
JESUS M. MACHADO, DDS, MSD 8
SPENCE T. GIBBS, DMD, MSD 5

17 8 5 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We honor the tradition and history that has earned us our reputation by prioritizing treatment outcomes, patient satisfaction, and professional collaboration.

endodontics OF CHERRY CREEK & DTC | 303.321.7930 | **WWW.CHERRYCREEKENDO.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

KREIDER FAMILY DENTISTRY

DR. CHANDRA KREIDER 18 *5280* Top Dentist 2025
DR. PING-PING LUCERO

We focus on providing friendly and customized dental care for you and your family. We enjoy getting to know our patients on a personal level in order to help them achieve optimal dental health. While we place an emphasis on preventive dental care, we also pride ourselves on our ability to comfortably restore your smile. It would be our pleasure to welcome you to join our dental family.

KREIDER FAMILY DENTISTRY

3955 E. Exposition Avenue, Suite 312, Denver, CO 80209
303.744.3636 | **WWW.KREIDERFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM**

ENDODONTICS

ELEVATED ENDODONTICS

ELLEN MACDONALD, DDS, MS

4 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

JASON READ, DMD, MS **9** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

When you're in pain, every minute matters. At Elevated Endodontics, we specialize in same-day emergency root canal care, offering fast relief and a surprisingly positive experience Whether it's swelling, pain keeping you up at night, or discomfort medication won't touch, we're here the same day you need us.

720.895.1717 | **WWW.ELEVATEDENDO.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

EC FAMILY AND COSMETIC DENTISTRY

DR. EWELINA CIULA **5** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. MELISSA HATZIDAKIS **5** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Drs. Ciula and Hatzidakis welcome you. We are highly trained, compassionate, and diligent dentists that prioritize patients and provide specialized treatment for each individual. From routine check-ups and cleanings to complex dental procedures, we have the expertise and experience to meet your unique needs and help you achieve optimal oral health.

700 Broadway, Suite 1133, Denver, CO 80203
303.863.1177 | **WWW.ECFAMILYDENTIST.COM**

ENDODONTICS

EVOLUTION
ENDODONTICS + PERIODONTICS

DR. SHAUN SOUCIE **13** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Invest in your comprehensive health and wellness. Our synergistic dual-specialty practice integrates cutting-edge technology and techniques to provide advanced endodontic and periodontic patient care. GentleWave and Fotona laser advanced irrigation facilitate bacterial elimination in complex root anatomy. 3D imaging fosters minimally invasive techniques to maintain the innate tooth strength, resistant to fracture. Periodontal therapy enhances esthetics, restores function, and improves quality of life. With us, you'll get precise, efficient, minimally invasive care with beautiful, predictable, long-term results.

753 Maleta Lane, Suite 201, Castle Rock, CO 80108
720.221.7774 | **WWW.EVOLUTIONENDO.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

FLANIGAN DENTISTRY

DR. JOHN M. FLANIGAN

11 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

“We ain’t comin’ no more... We here!”
—Coach Prime

2696 S. Colorado Boulevard, Suite 400
Denver, CO 80222
303.758.3935
WWW.FLANIGANDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

HAKALA FAMILY DENTISTRY

KATE HAKALA, DDS 17 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

FIRAS HABAS, DDS

Dr. Kate Hakala and her staff are pleased to welcome Dr. Firas Habas to the team. Dr. Habas is a graduate of Marquette Dental School and has received advanced training in the U.S. and Switzerland. The practice continues to provide personalized general dentistry to patients of all ages.

425 S. Cherry Street, Suite 100, Denver, CO 80246
303.321.8967
WWW.HAKALAFAMILYDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

HIGHLAND SMILES

DR. JENNIFER ROHLEDER 12 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S., University of Nebraska Medical Center

Dr. Jennifer Rohleder and the team at Highland Smiles realize that just as each person is unique, so is each smile. We deliver comprehensive, customized dental solutions utilizing state-of-the-art technology to create your most ideal smile. Highland Smiles—more than just your smile.

3480 W. 32nd Avenue
Denver, CO 80211
303.623.0407
WWW.HIGHLANDSMILES.NET

GENERAL DENTISTRY

HIGHLANDS RANCH DENTAL CARE

DR. LYNELLE ZABEL 13 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

At Highlands Ranch Dental Care, we focus on conservative treatment approaches and tailored oral care plans to enhance your dental health and esthetics. Our use of Digital Smile Design (DSD) allows us to digitally envision your unique smile, ensuring outcomes that are both functional and beautiful. Call our office to schedule your appointment and take the first step toward achieving your healthiest, most confident smile.

Highlands Ranch dental care

9137 Ridgeline Boulevard, Suite 150
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129 | 303.470.0017
WWW.HIGHLANDSRANCHDENTALCARE.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

HIGHPOINT DENTAL CARE & IMPLANT CENTER

DR. JUSTIN BALTZ 3 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Justin Baltz has been pushing the limits of providing efficient, gentle, digital, and complex dentistry to patients in Aurora, greater Denver, and completed his third global dental mission with his wife to Cambodia this past December. Highpoint Dental Care boasts an experienced staff, multiple ceramist designers, and in-house dental lab.

3574 S. Tower Road, Unit B, Aurora, CO 80013
303.617.9100 | **WWW.HIGHPOINTDENTALCO.COM**

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

AUSTIN IVEY, DDS, MD

2 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Ivey enjoys all aspects of oral surgery, but has particular interests in dental implants, facial trauma, nutrition, and whole health approaches to surgery, bone grafting, and regenerative medicine within dentistry. He started practicing dentistry in 2013. Dr. Ivey is a published author in implant dentistry and is a member of the Colorado Dental Association, Metro Denver Dental Society, the ADA, AAOMS, and the Colorado Association of Oral Surgery.

IVEY
ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY

14000 E. Arapahoe Road, Suite 320
Centennial, CO 80112
303.493.1933
WWW.IVEYOFS.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

DR. HALEE LESCH

8 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dental Hygiene School, Texas Woman's University; D.D.S., University of Texas Health Science Center; AEGD Residency, University of Oklahoma; Fellowship in the Academy of General Dentistry Award

Dr. Lesch has been passionate about dentistry from a young age—this led her to become a hygienist, before she went on to dental school. Because of her background in hygiene, Dr. Lesch has always focused on prevention by educating and empowering her patients. At Lesch Family Dental, our patients are treated like family. We believe in providing the highest-quality dentistry that gives long-lasting results.

LESCH FAMILY DENTAL

9950 W. 80th Avenue, Suite 12, Arvada, CO 80005
303.424.6226 | **WWW.LESCHFAMILYDENTAL.COM**

PERIODONTICS

LITTLETON IMPLANTS & PERIODONTICS

RYAN M. JENKINS, DMD **7** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Ryan Jenkins is a board-certified periodontist and dental implant surgeon. Our practice strives to provide the most advanced and optimal surgical care to our patients, including dental implants and LANAP laser periodontal therapy, in a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere.

Littleton Implants & PERIODONTICS

26 W. Dry Creek Circle, Suite 540
Littleton, CO 80120
303.797.1211
WWW.LITTLETONIMPLANTPERIO.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

LODO DENTAL

NICOLE FURUTA, DDS **13** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

LINDSAY FOX, DMD **6** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Conveniently located a block from the 16th Street Mall, Lodo Dental sees patients from throughout the Denver Metro area! As Lodo's first female-owned dental practice, Dr. Furuta and Dr. Fox combine the most modern, proven dental technologies and practices, with an emphasis on comfortably and safely providing the highest level of care. We are now accepting new patients and would love to see your smile!

lodo DENTAL

1435 Wazee Street, Suite 102 & 103, Denver, CO 80202
303.623.5636 | **WWW.LODODENTAL.COM**

ORTHODONTICS

MEADOWS ORTHODONTICS

DAN REJMAN, DDS, MS **14** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Dan Rejman is a Board-Certified Orthodontic Specialist serving Castle Rock and surrounding communities. Kindness and small-town values are the foundation of Meadows Orthodontics, and our patients and parents love our incredible staff!

TWO CONVENIENT CASTLE ROCK LOCATIONS

3993 Limelight Avenue, Suite B
Castle Rock, CO 80109

848 N. Ridge Road, Suite D
Castle Rock, CO 80104

303.660.0112 | **WWW.MEADOWSORTHODONTICS.COM**

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

NELSON & WELLS
ORAL & MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

DR. STEVEN R. NELSON **18** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. ZACHARY T. WELLS **11** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

The doctors at Nelson & Wells Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery have been serving our community for over 50 years. Drs. Nelson and Wells practice a full scope of oral and maxillofacial surgery with expertise ranging from corrective jaw surgery to wisdom tooth removal, bone grafting and dental implant placement.

NELSON & WELLS

6850 E. Hampden Avenue, Suite 202
Denver, CO 80224
303.758.6850 | **WWW.ORALSURGERYDENVER.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

PEAK VIEW DENTAL

JENNIFER SIBO, DDS, FAGD, D. ABDSM

13 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

MERCY VASKA, DMD

Dr. Sibo and Dr. Vaska are committed to understanding and meeting their patients' needs in a relaxed and compassionate environment. Using state-of-the-art technology, including same-day crowns and dental lasers, Dr. Sibo ensures that every patient has the tools needed to achieve optimal oral health and wellness.

PEAK•VIEW DENTAL

4344 Woodlands Boulevard, Suite 140
Castle Rock, CO 80104 | 303.660.9333
WWW.PEAKVIEWDENTAL.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

PEARL DENTISTRY

DR. STEFANIE WALKER 14 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

DR. AMANDA POOLER

Excellence in Dentistry & Aesthetics. At Pearl Dentistry, Drs. Stefanie Walker and Amanda Pooler provide modern care and individualized attention for each patient. As a boutique practice, the duo focuses on superior cosmetic results, restorative dentistry, BOTOX treatments, Invisalign, dental implant restorations, and overall preventative care.

pearl
DENTISTRY

2200 W. 29th Avenue
Denver, CO 80211
720.440.9296
WWW.PEARLDENTISTRYDENVER.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

PLATTE CANYON DENTAL

CHRISTINA LINN, DMD 3 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Christina Linn wholeheartedly believes that a healthy smile is fundamental to an individual's overall health and well-being. Her favorite part of dentistry is truly getting to know her patients and helping them feel at ease in the dental setting.

PLATTE CANYON
DENTAL

5950 S. Platte Canyon Road, Suite D-9
Littleton, CO 80123
303.797.2286
WWW.PLATTECANYONDENTAL.COM

ENDODONTICS

ROOT OF ENDODONTICS

EMMANUEL PAGUIO, DDS, MS

10 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Looking for a family-friendly endodontist? Look no further! We specialize in root canals and saving teeth, while treating all patients with care and compassion. Dr. Paguio is a Board-Certified Endodontist that is thorough with his diagnosis, meticulous with the procedure, and understanding of dental anxiety. He uses state-of-the-art technology to ensure the most precise treatments. Saving your smile is our priority!

9950 W. 80th Avenue, Suite 21, Arvada, CO 80005
303.422.0607 | **WWW.ROOTOFENDO.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

SANITAS FAMILY DENTISTRY

DR. KRISTA BESEDA **1** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

D.D.S from University of Colorado, OKU honors recipient

After 10 years of practice, my passion has shifted to include airway and myofunctional-focused, full-body wellness. The mouth is the gateway to many health conditions, and we pride ourselves on taking time to hear your story and personalize care to your needs and your future.

767 Pearl Street, Suite 230, Boulder, CO
303.449.8875
WWW.SANITASDENTISTRY.COM

GENERAL DENTISTRY

SIGNATURE DENTISTRY OF ARVADA

MICHAEL WOODS, DDS **9** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

KRISTA MOORE, DDS **1** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Dr. Woods and Dr. Moore provide exceptional dental care in a welcoming, family-friendly environment. Their commitment to personalized treatment ensures a comfortable experience for every patient. Dr. Woods, with a passion for cosmetic dentistry, is a former instructor, while Dr. Moore serves as a board member for the Trust of Colorado.

14950 W. 64th Avenue, Suite A, Arvada, CO 80007
303.423.0930 | **WWW.SIGNATUREDENTISTRYOFARVADA.COM**

ORTHODONTICS

SLOSS ORTHODONTICS

ERIN A. SLOSS, DDS, MS **17** *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Board-Certified Orthodontist

Located near Park Meadows mall, Dr. Sloss has been serving the Centennial area for 20 years. She specializes in treating children, teens, and adults; and volunteers on the cleft palate team at Rocky Mountain Hospital for Children. Her meticulous eye and gentle hands will fine-tune your smile to keep you happy for the rest of your life! Call us to schedule your complimentary consultation! #smilesarealwaysinstyle

9094 E. Mineral Avenue, Suite 220, Centennial, CO 80112
303.799.7733 | **WWW.SC-ORTHO.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

STUDIO Z DENTAL

TOM ZYVOLOSKI, DDS, IBDM, AIAOMT 7
ZADE FARAJ, DDS 6
SARA QADI, DDS
MARSHA SONATY, DDS

7 6 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

For us, the aim is not just being the best dentists; it is the satisfaction and long-term health of our patients. We built our award-winning practice on happy referrals. You will always receive the highest quality service from our trusted, caring, holistic dentists. We also offer surgical services.

818 W. South Boulder Road, Louisville, CO 80027
303.802.4313 | **WWW.STUDIOZDENTAL.COM**

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

SUNRISE PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

ELIZABETH CRESPI, DMD 10 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

All children deserve to have healthy smiles for life! At Sunrise, we strive to create a safe (and fun!) first dental experience for every patient. Dr. Crespi's passion for kids and conservative approach to dentistry are the foundation of her patient-care philosophy.

"I believe creating both educational and interactive dental experiences from day one is the key to our success," Dr. Crespi says.

3650 E. First Avenue, Suite 301
Denver, CO 80206 | 720.660.2467
WWW.SUNRISEPEDSDENTISTRY.COM

PROSTHODONTICS & GENERAL DENTISTRY

UPTOWN COMPREHENSIVE DENTISTRY & PROSTHODONTICS

DR. JOHN CHEN 9 *5280* Top Dentist 2025
DR. JENNIFER STILL 1 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

We strive to provide the highest quality of care. Prosthodontists go through three years of extra training after dental school, specializing in restoring smiles and missing teeth. Our office focuses on full mouth reconstructions, implant restorations, removable dentures, and cosmetic dentistry. We look forward to meeting and welcoming you to our practice!

22650 E. Hinsdale Avenue, Suite #A, Aurora, CO 80016
303.627.5755 | **WWW.UPTOWNPROSTHODONTICS.COM**

GENERAL DENTISTRY

WYNKOOP DENTISTRY

MEGHAN HOLUB, DDS 3 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

NIKA GUTIERREZ, DDS 2 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

SARAH FORSBERG, DMD

Our atmosphere is laid-back, and we always strive to provide an amazing experience. We are the first certified-green office in Denver, offer 3D X-rays, provide same-day crowns, are Platinum Plus Invisalign providers, and offer a variety of digital solutions providing the highest-quality care for our patients. We can't wait to meet you!

♥ *With heavy hearts, we share the loss of our beloved Dr. Erin Cherry. Thank you, Dr. Erin, for the light that you brought to our practice.*

1501 Wazee Street, Suite 1A, Denver, CO 80202
303.572.4487 | **WWW.WYNKOOPDENTISTRY.COM**

PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

FOOTHILLS PEDIATRIC DENTISTRY

DR. KAITLIN A. BOWMAN *Board-Certified Pediatric Dentist*

DR. DAVID T. RAMIREZ 14 *5280* Top Dentist 2025
Board-Certified Pediatric Dentist

foothills pediatric
DENTISTRY, P.C.
est. 1999

LAFAYETTE	**LONGMONT**	**THORNTON**
303.604.9500	303.702.9501	303.452.9502

WWW.FOOTHILLSPEDIATRICDENTISTRY.COM

ORAL + MAXILLOFACIAL SURGERY

HIGHLANDS RANCH ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY

RYAN HAMBLETON, DMD 6 *5280* Top Dentist 2025

Highlands Ranch Oral & Facial Surgery is honored to be listed in *5280* among such talented and successful dental professionals. Our mission at Highlands Ranch Oral & Facial Surgery is to provide an exceptional clinical experience through service, compassion, and professionalism.

HIGHLANDS RANCH
ORAL & FACIAL SURGERY

300 Plaza Drive, Suite 175
Highlands Ranch, CO 80129
720.996.0210
WWW.HRSURGERY.COM

Dining Guide

PRICE KEY
Average Entrée

$	under $15
$$	$16 to $20
$$$	$21 to $30
$$$$	$31 and higher

SYMBOL KEY

●
Indicates a restaurant featured in *5280* for the first time (though not necessarily a restaurant that has just opened).

★
Indicates inclusion in *5280*'s 2024 list of Denver's best restaurants. These selections are at the discretion of *5280* editors and are subject to change.

★ A5 STEAKHOUSE $$$$
LoDo / Steak House This unfussy chophouse by the team behind Forget Me Not and Tap and Burger features perfectly seared steaks, hearty sides, and draft cocktails. Never pass up the beef tartare katsu sando and the chickpea fries to start your meal. Reservations accepted. *1600 15th St., 303-623-0534. Dinner*

AFRICAN GRILL & BAR $$
Lakewood / African Explore Africa at this warm and inviting restaurant run by the Osei-Fordwuo family. Peanut soups, fried fish, samosas, and jollof rice are just some of the deeply flavorful options. Reservations accepted. *955 S. Kipling Parkway, Lakewood, 303-985-4497. Lunch, Dinner*

★ ALMA FONDA FINA $$$$
LoHi / Mexican This Michelin-starred contemporary Mexican restaurant wows with its creative, shareable plates, which often feature house-made masa and flavor-packed salsas. The camote asado (roasted sweet potato) is an excellent way to start off your meal. Reservations accepted. *2556 15th St., 303-455-9463. Dinner*

● ALTEÑO $$$$
Cherry Creek / Mexican This opulant destination from Michelin-starred chef Johnny Curiel of Alma Fonda Fina serves contemporary Mexican fare influenced by the chef's memories of the highlands of Jalisco. Seafood from the region's coastal waters and heartier dishes from higher elevations share menu space. Reservations accepted. *2556 15th St., 303-455-9463. Dinner*

ANNETTE $$$
Aurora / American James Beard Award–winning chef Caroline Glover's Annette delivers a lineup of seasonal salads, pastas, wood-fired proteins, and other comforting bites in a modern, inviting space. Don't skip dessert, particularly if pecan pie is on the menu. Reservations accepted. *2501 Dallas St., Ste. 108, Aurora, 720-710-9975. Dinner*

AVANTI FOOD & BEVERAGE $$
LoHi / International Current tenants of Denver's first food hall include Farang Thai Kitchen, Bowls by Ko, Quiero Arepas, Knockabout Burgers, Pizza Bandit, and Eloise. Also try the Boulder and Vail locations. Reservations not accepted. *3200 Pecos St., 720-269-4778. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

★ BAEKGA $$$
Lowry Field / Korean Chef-owner Sean Baek serves flavorful Korean eats at this quaint Lowry Town Center spot. Don't miss out on the lunch specials, hearty portions of protein and rice that come with plenty of banchan (side dishes). Reservations not accepted. *200 Quebec St., Ste. 115, 720-639-3872. Lunch, Dinner*

BÁNH & BUTTER BAKERY CAFÉ $
Aurora / French Thoa Nguyen crafts French pastries inspired by her Vietnamese heritage at this East Colfax cafe. Go for the dazzling crepe cakes, each made with 25 to 30 layers. Reservations not accepted. *9935 E. Colfax Ave., Aurora, 720-513-9313. Breakfast, Lunch*

BAROLO GRILL $$$$
Cherry Creek / Italian Dedication to ingredients and tradition translates to the food and extensive wine menu at this elegant eatery, which is focused on the cuisines of northern Italy's Tuscany and Piedmont regions. Reservations accepted. *3030 E. Sixth Ave., 303-393-1040. Dinner*

BASTA $$$
Boulder / Italian This wood-fired eatery offers bold flavors and interesting wines. Try the clam pizza. Reservations accepted. *3601 Arapahoe Ave., Boulder, 303-997-8775. Dinner*

BASTIEN'S RESTAURANT $$$$
City Park / Steak House Enjoy hearty, home-style cooking at this local favorite, which has been family-owned for more than 80 years. Come for the signature sugar-rubbed steaks. Reservations accepted. *3503 E. Colfax Ave., 303-322-0363. Dinner*

BECKON $$$$
RiNo / Contemporary Chef Duncan Holmes brings an elevated, intimate dining experience to Larimer Street. The seasonal menu changes frequently, and excellent, thoughtful wine pairings are available. Reservations accepted. *2843 Larimer St., 303-749-0020. Dinner*

THE BINDERY $$$
LoHi / Contemporary Linda Hampsten Fox's eatery, market, and bakery offers worldly fare inspred by her travels. Settle in for the smoked rabbit pecan pie with mustard gelato. Reservations accepted. *1817 Central St., 303-993-2364. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Brunch*

BLACKBELLY $$$
Boulder / American Chef Hosea Rosenberg's carnivore-friendly menu focuses on charcuterie and daily butcher specials. Also check out the adjacent butcher shop and market, which peddles breakfast, lunch, and locally made retail goods, or the newer Blackbelly Butcher in Denver. Reservations accepted. *1606 Conestoga St., Boulder, 303-247-1000. Dinner*

● BLACK CAT FARMSTEAD $$$
Longmont / American Chef Eric Skokan reinvented his Boulder-based Black Cat Bistro by moving the entire operation to a farm 12 miles north of town. Diners enjoy foothills views in private cabanas that seat up to 12. Dinner is a set, multicourse meal based on seasonally available vegetables, grains, legumes, and farm-rasied meats. Reservations required. *9889 N. 51st St., Longmont, 303-444-5500. Dinner*

BRASSERIE BRIXTON $$$$
Cole / French Pair the likes of steak frites, pâté with house-baked sourdough, and other comforting French specialties with a glass of wine at this always-packed neighborhood bistro. But also be prepared for culinary creations that stray from the French canon. Reservations accepted. *3701 N. Williams St., 720-617-7911. Dinner*

BRUTØ $$$$
Downtown / International At the Wolf's Tailor's sister restaurant at the Dairy Block, executive chef Byron Gomez highlights heritage grains and house ferments in an omakase-style tasting menu. Tack on the cocktail pairing to make the experience even more special. Reservations accepted. *1801 Blake St., 720-325-2195. Dinner*

C BURGER $
Englewood / American This fast-casual kitchen is the first in Colorado to source 100 percent of its beef from local regenerative farms. Try the classic double cheeseburger with a side of seasoned fries. Also try the Boulder location. Reservations not accepted. *200 W. Belleview Ave., Ste. 100, Englewood, 720-432-5205. Lunch, Dinner*

CAFE AION $$$
Boulder / Spanish This tucked away bistro is styled after a European tapas bar. Enjoy a menu of small plates filled with local, seasonal ingredients. Try the season's latest house-cured chorizo or one of four paella preparations to built for sharing. Reservations accepted. *1235 Pennsylvania Ave., Boulder, 303-993-8131. Lunch, Dinner, Brunch*

★ CARNE $$$$
RiNo / Steak House The newest restaurant from chef Dana Rodriguez, this "steak home" grills up exquisite cuts of beef at a range of price points. Also explore its internationally inspired menu of shared plates and composed entrées. Reservations accepted. *2601 Larimer St., 303-953-1558. Dinner*

CARRERA'S TACOS $
Greenwood Village / Mexican Brothers Josh and Ryan Carrera sling West Coast–style tacos at this food-truck-turned-brick-and-mortar. Try the Cali burrito, stuffed with french fries and your choice of protein Reservations not accepted. *7939 E. Arapahoe Road, Greenwood Village, 720-689-8035. Lunch, Dinner*

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CHEF ZORBA'S $$
Congress Park / Greek Chef Zorba's has served American and Greek fare, burgers, salads, sandwiches, and classic breakfast dishes, in the Congress Park neighborhood since 1979. Don't miss the gyro sandwich. Reservations not accepted. *2626 E. 12th Ave., 303-321-0091. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

CONVIVIO CAFÉ $
Berkeley / Cafe This bilingual cafe is named after the Guatemalan convivio, a get-together where all are welcome. Sip on spiced lattes and indulge in pastries and light lunch fare, like alfajores (dulce de leche cookies) and tostadas. Reservations not accepted. *4935 W. 38th Ave., Breakfast, Lunch*

COPERTA $$$
Uptown / Italian Tuck into comforting Italian fare at this restaurant, which celebrates the cuisine of Rome and southern Italy. Handmade pastas, creamy burrata, and fiery pollo alla diavola are among the top choices. Reservations accepted. *400 E. 20th Ave., 720-749-4666. Dinner*

CORRIDA $$$$
Boulder / Spanish Housed on the rooftop level of the Pearl West building, this elegant Spanish steak house offers stunning Flatiron views and fabulous cocktails and wines. Splurge on the Japanese wagyu or opt for a regeneratively sourced steak. Reservations accepted. *1023 Walnut St., Ste. 400, Boulder, 303-444-1333. Dinner, Brunch*

CORSICA WINE BAR $
RiNo / Mediterranean This charming eatery has a deep wine list, inventive cocktails, and share-worthy specialties inspired by the French island of Corsica. Reservations accepted. *2801 Walnut St., Ste. 100, 720-994-2020. Dinner*

CUBA CUBA CAFE & BAR $$$
Golden Triangle / Latin American Don't miss the mojitos at this authentic, family-owned Cuban restaurant. Reservations accepted. *1173 Delaware St., 303-605-2822. Dinner*

★ **DÂN DÃ** $$
Aurora / Vietnamese Family recipes are on the menu at An and Thao Nguyen's cozy Vietnamese eatery dedicated to comfort food. Don't miss the dazzling spring roll towers and bubbling clay pots. Reservations accepted. *9945 E. Colfax Ave., Aurora, 720-476-7183. Lunch, Dinner*

DAUGHTER THAI KITCHEN & BAR $$$
LoHi / Thai This date-night-ready Thai restaurant from Ounjit Hardacre serves beautifully plated dishes and inventive cocktails with an elegant ambience to match. The menu features favorites such as pad thai and massaman curry alongside a rotating lineup of rare-in-Denver specialties. Reservations accepted. *1700 Platte St., Ste. 140, 720-667-4652. Lunch, Dinner*

DOMO $$
Lincoln Park / Japanese After a number of temporary closures, this bucolic eatery is back to serving its homey Japanese fare in a relaxed atmosphere. Don't miss the curry, which has been a menu mainstay since Domo opened in 1996. Reservations not accepted. *1365 Osage St., 303-595-3666. Lunch, Dinner*

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★ DOUGH COUNTER $$
University Hills / Pizza This fast-casual pizzeria specializes in Sicilian- and New York-style pies. For the former, we especially like the Triple Threat, which is striped with marinara, pesto, and vodka sauce. The house-made chicken tenders are also delightful. Reservations not accepted. *2466 S. Colorado Blvd., 303-997-8977. Lunch, Dinner*

DRAGONFLY NOODLE $$
LoDo / Asian This eatery from restaurateur Edwin Zoe serves a multinational variety of bao and noodle dishes. Order any of the slurp-worthy bowls of ramen with house-made noodles. Also try the Boulder location. Reservations not accepted. *1350 16th St. Mall, 720-543-8000. Lunch, Dinner*

EL TACO DE MEXICO $
Lincoln Park / Mexican This Denver favorite and James Beard Foundation America's Classics winner serves Mexican food with an emphasis on authenticity. Try the chile relleno burrito. Reservations not accepted. *714 Santa Fe Drive, 303-623-3926. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

FAMOUS ORIGINAL J'S PIZZA $$
Five Points / Pizza Joshua Pollack's New York-style and rectangular grandma pies are totally customizable and available by the slice. Try the meat lovers with sausage, pepperoni, and diced Taylor ham. Reservations not accepted. *715 E. 26th Ave., 720-420-9102. Lunch, Dinner*

FISH N BEER $$$
RiNo / Seafood Kevin Morrison offers approachable, fresh seafood and a hearty beer list at this casual oysterette. Try the ceviche or wood-fired whole bass. Reservations accepted. *3510 Larimer St., 303-248-3497. Dinner*

FOX AND THE HEN $$
LoHi / Breakfast This sunny brunch eatery brightens up any morning. The animal-style hash brown smothered in American cheese and special sauce (an homage to In-N-Out) is a must-order, but any of the elevated toasts or egg dishes are a smart way to start your day. Reservations accepted. *2257 W. 32nd Ave., 303-862-6795. Breakfast, Lunch, Brunch*

★ FRASCA FOOD AND WINE $$$$
Boulder / Italian The elegant fare at Frasca, an ode to the cuisine of Friuli-Venezia Giulia in Italy from master sommelier Bobby Stuckey and chef Lachlan Mackinnon-Patterson, always wows. Splurge on executive chef Ian Palazzola's nine-course Friulano menu. Reservations accepted. *1738 Pearl St., Boulder, 303-442-6966. Dinner*

GAIA MASALA AND BURGER $$
Speer / Indian Go for divey tikka masala cheesesteaks and smothered fries at this fast-casual Indian eatery, which serves up an excellent saag, to boot. Also try the Boulder and LoDo locations. Reservations not accepted. *609 Grant St., 720-779-0762. Lunch, Dinner*

THE GINGER PIG $$
Berkeley / Asian Chef-owner Natascha Hess serves Asian-inspired street food with playful twists at this casual spot. The lamb stir-fry and the Hong Kong French toast are must-order dishes. Also try the takeout-only Boulder location. Reservations not accepted. *4262 Lowell Blvd., 720-324-8416. Dinner*

GLADYS $
Edgewater / American Vegetable small plates feature at this concept inside Edgewater Public Market. Don't miss the plant-based Reuben sandwich. Reservations not accepted. *5505 W. 20th Ave., Ste. 116, Edgewater, 303-276-3309. Lunch, Dinner*

GUARD AND GRACE $$$$
Downtown / Steak House Chef Troy Guard's modern steak house offers a chic setting for its elevated fare. Try the flight of filet mignon. Reservations accepted. *1801 California St., 303-293-8500. Lunch, Dinner*

GUSTO $$$
West Colfax / Italian From chef Lon Symensma of ChoLon fame, this Italian eatery abutting Sloan's Lake plates up a playful variety of antipasti, pastas, and pizza. Reservations accepted. *1671 Raleigh St., 303-284-0932. Lunch, Dinner*

HEY KIDDO $$$$
Berkeley / Contemporary From the team behind the Wolf's Tailor and Brutø, this eclectic, globally inspired restaurant presents fine dining fare in

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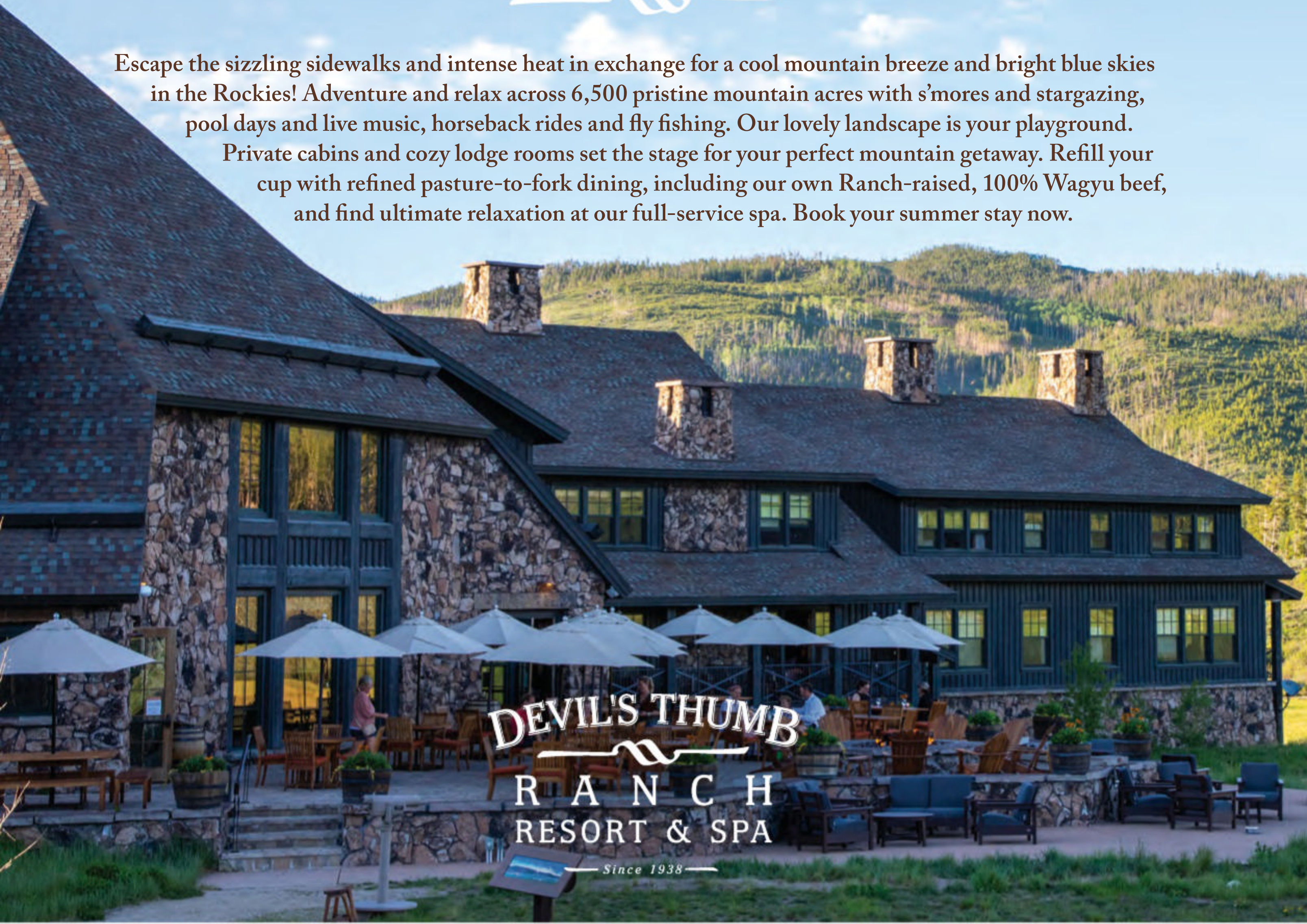

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relaxed environs. Try the wagyu beef galbi with the chef rice that's shaken tableside. Reservations accepted. *4337 Tennyson St., Ste. 300, 720-778-2977. Dinner*

★ HOP ALLEY $$$$

RiNo / Chinese From Tommy Lee of Uncle, this neighborhood hangout's daily menu is composed of dishes rooted in Chinese tradition with a distinctive flair. If spots are open at the luxurious chef's counter, though, don't miss the exclusive experience. Reservations accepted. *3500 Larimer St., 720-379-8340. Dinner*

ISTANBUL CAFE & BAKERY $

Washington Virginia Vale / Middle Eastern Inside the shopping center at the intersection of South Monaco Parkway and Leetsdale Drive, friendly owner Ismet Yilmaz prepares authentic Turkish pastries. Try the su böreği (a flaky cheese pastry) or pistachio baklava. Also check out Yilmaz's food truck, Turkish Chef on Wheels. Reservations not accepted. *850 S. Monaco Parkway., Ste. 9, 720-787-7751. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

IZAKAYA DEN $$$

Platt Park / Japanese Ultra-fresh sushi, sashimi, and creative small plates are on the menu at this local favorite. Reservations accepted. *1487-A S. Pearl St., 303-777-0691. Lunch, Dinner*

JACQUES $$$

LoHi / French This romantic restaurant serves top-notch renditions of all the French classics—duck confit, French onion soup, mussels—but don't miss dishes like the American-style burger and fries, which impress just as much. Reservations accepted. *3200 Tejon St., 720-925-2332. Dinner*

JOVANINA'S BROKEN ITALIAN $$$$

LoDo / Italian This gorgeous LoDo eatery expands on traditional Italian fare by incorporating unexpected, seasonal ingredients. Handmade pastas and wood-fired focaccia and pizzas provide an additional draw. Reservations accepted. *1520 Blake St., 720-541-7721. Dinner*

KAWA NI $$$$

LoHi / Asian Connecticut transplant Bill Taibe helms this upscale izakaya concept in LoHi. Peruse the eclectic menu of noodles, sushi, and small plates, and don't miss the shaved broccoli miso goma. Reservations accepted. *1900 W. 32nd Ave., 303-455-9208. Dinner*

★ KIKÉ'S RED TACOS $

LoHi / Mexican This brick-and-mortar location of a popular Mexican food truck is known for its quesabirria tacos, which come stuffed with cheese and your choice of meat. Doctor up your order with the rainbow of sauces at the salsa bar. Reservations not accepted. *1200 W. 38th Ave., 720-397-0591. Lunch, Dinner*

LA CHIVA $$

Platt Park / Colombian This brick-and-mortar, spawned from the popular food truck of the same name, gives Denverites a cozy, colorful place to enjoy the cuisine of chef-owner Jorge Aguirre's native Colombia. Try the sancocho, a hearty, slow-simmered soup made with chicken, green plantain, yuca, corn, and Colombian spices. Reservations accepted. *1446 S. Broadway, 720-389-9847. Lunch, Dinner*

LA DIABLA POZOLE Y MEZCAL $$

Ballpark / Mexican This lively eatery from James Beard Award finalist Jose Avila serves up comforting pozole and other traditional Mexican fare at affordable prices. Don't miss the weekend brunch for chilaquiles, huaraches, and a killer house michelada. Reservations not accepted. *2233 Larimer St., 720-519-1060. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, Brunch*

LA FILLETTE BAKERY $$

Montclair / French This French-inspired bakery makes magical laminated creations, including a brunch burger on a split croissant. A stop for a quick meal always results in a boxful of pastries for later. Reservations not accepted. *6217 E. 14th Ave., 303-355-0022. Breakfast, Lunch, Brunch*

★ LA FORÊT $$$$

Speer / French Transport yourself to the forest at this cocktail-centric French restaurant decorated with floor-to-ceiling aspen trunks. Head in during pastis hour to sample the anise-flavored aperitif with small plates, or dine on dishes like stag au poivre or rabbit vadouvan. Reservations not accepted. *38 S. Broadway, 303-351-7938. Dinner*

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LE FRENCH $$
Hampden / French This chic Belleview Station bistro, owned by French-Senegalese sisters, transports diners through Parisian cuisine with African influences. Pick up some pastries to-go for later from the on-site bakery. Also try the Hale location. Reservations accepted. *4901 S. Newport St., 720-710-8963. Lunch, Dinner, Brunch*

LEEZAKAYA $$$$
Aurora / Japanese From the team behind Tofu Story and Mono Mono Korean Fried Chicken, this swanky eatery boasts an expansive menu of Japanese bites and sake. The mentaiko creamy pasta is a must-order. Reservations accepted. *2710 S. Havana St., Aurora, 720-769-6595. Lunch, Dinner*

LEVEN DELI CO. $$
Golden Triangle / Deli Classic deli meets California cool at this bright spot. Get a taste of the house-made pastrami on the Reuben sandwich or go for the crisp chop salad. Also try the newer Leven Supply Co. in Washington Park West. Reservations not accepted. *123 W. 12th Ave., 303-325-5691. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

LITTLE ARTHUR'S $$$
Capitol Hill / American Located inside Out of the Barrel Taproom, Little Arthur's uses high-quality ingredients to craft viral East Coast specialities such as a $40 margherita pizza and a $24 cheesesteak. Reservations not accepted. *205 E. Seventh Ave., Dinner*

LOU'S ITALIAN SPECIALTIES $$
Curtis Park / Italian This takeout-only spot by Joshua Pollack of Rosenberg's Bagels & Delicatessen takes after classic Tri State Italian delis. Try the Louie, packed with genoa salami, capicola, ham, and provolone cheese and drizzles of oil and vinegar. Reservations not accepted. *3357 N. Downing St., 720-287-3642. Lunch, Dinner*

LUCHADOR TACO & MORE $$
Whittier / Mexican Chef Zuri Resendiz's vibrant takes on Mexican street food are refined and full of flavor. Don't miss the Peruvian-inspired plates, either, such as the lomo saltado or causa tartare. Reservations accepted. *2030 E. 28th Ave., 303-954-0672. Dinner*

★ **LUCINA EATERY & BAR** $$$
South Park Hill / Latin American Bold flavors from Latin America, the Caribbean, and coastal Spain tantalize at this lively restaurant. Try the mofongo (plantain mash) or the two-person paella with rotating toppings only served on Fridays and Saturdays. Reservations accepted. *2245 Kearney St., Ste. 101, 720-814-1053. Dinner*

★ **MAJOR TOM** $$$$
RiNo / American This lounge from the team behind Beckon offers a Champagne-centric drink menu and a delectable lineup of shareable bites. Enjoy larger-format plates at a table inside, or throw back some oysters on the beautiful patio. Reservations accepted. *2845 Larimer St., 303-848-9777. Dinner, Brunch*

★ **MAKFAM** $$
Baker / Chinese The Chinese cuisine at this street-food-inspired, fast-casual eatery blends tradition with a whole lot of fun. Try the jian bing (scallion pancake) sandwiches or the fried crab cheese wontons, which come dusted with sugar. Reservations not accepted. *39 W. First Ave., . Lunch, Dinner*

★ **MARIGOLD** $$$$
Lyons / European This small, light-filled restaurant serves seasonally driven French- and Italian-influenced fare. The pink-peppercorn-laced farinata (chickpea pancake) is a delicious mainstay of the frequently changing menu; the amaro-centric cocktail program is also delightful. Reservations accepted. *405 Main St., Ste. B, Lyons, 303-823-2333. Dinner*

MERCANTILE $$$
LoDo / American Chef Alex Seidel offers upscale, contemporary farm-to-table fare, with a menu divided into earth, sea, grain, and pasture. Start with roasted vegetables before moving on to pastas and meaty entrées. Reservations accepted. *1701 Wynkoop St., Ste. 155, 720-460-3733. Lunch, Dinner*

MIZUNA $$$$
Capitol Hill / Contemporary Chef-owner Frank Bonanno's seasonal cuisine capitalizes on fresh ingredients. Don't miss the decadent beef Wellington. Reservations accepted. *225 E. Seventh Ave., 303-832-4778. Dinner*

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★ **MOLOTOV KITSCHEN & COCKTAILS** $$$$
City Park / Eastern European The ever-changing menu at this aptly kitschy restaurant celebrates the cuisine of Ukraine, with shoutouts to other Slavic traditions. Try house-baked breads, creative takes on borscht, and Eastern European dumplings. Reservations accepted. *3333 E. Colfax Ave., 303-316-3333. Dinner*

NA FAVOLA $$
Greenwood Village / Italian The Italian proprietors behind this friendly trattoria use simple, carefully sourced ingredients from their homeland to create fresh pasta dishes and light, crisp Roman-style pizzas. Reservations accepted. *5909 S. University Blvd., Greenwood Village, 983-999-4139. Lunch, Dinner*

NANA'S DIM SUM & DUMPLINGS $$
LoHi / Chinese Enjoy a spread of house-made dumplings and shareable Asian plates at this swanky restaurant in LoHi. Xiaolongbao lovers should go for the bite-size thumblings. Multiple locations. Reservations accepted. *3316 Tejon St., Ste. 102, 720-769-4051. Lunch, Dinner*

NI TUYO $$$
Belcaro / Mexican Visit this Bonnie Brae eatery for bubbly molcajetes, piping-hot stone bowls of Mexican meats and veggies stewed in salsa. Or grab a seat at the bar for a tasty margarita with an order of tortilla chips and guacamole. Reservations not accepted. *730 S. University Blvd., 303-282-8896. Dinner*

NOBLE RIOT $$$
RiNo / American Find charcuterie boards, immaculate fried chicken, and other bites at this sommelier-operated natural wine bar. This is the place to find uncommon pét-nats and orange wines. Reservations accepted. *1336 27th St., 303-993-5330. Dinner*

★ **NOISETTE RESTAURANT & BAKERY** $$$$
LoHi / French Chefs Tim and Lillian Lu serve elegant renditions of bourgeoisie-style specialties (French home-cooked comforts) in a romantic, light-drenched space. Tear into the perfectly crisp baguette to set the Parisian scene for your dining experience. Reservations accepted. *3254 Navajo St., Ste. 100, 720-769-8103. Dinner, Brunch*

OAK AT FOURTEENTH $$$$
Boulder / Seasonal This bright space just off the Pearl Street Mall offers a diverse, ever-changing menu of seasonal, oak-fired eats from chef Steve Redzikowski and creative cocktails from Bryan Dayton. Order the kale salad, roasted ocean trout, or a handmade pasta. Reservations accepted. *1400 Pearl St., Boulder, 303-444-3622. Dinner*

★ **ODIE B'S** $
Sunnyside / American Sandwiches reach their prime at this fast-casual joint. Try twists on classics like the fried chicken sandwich with deviled egg spread or the chopped cheese with breakfast sausage instead of hamburger. Also try the Cole location. Reservations not accepted. *2651 W. 38th Ave., 303-993-8078. Breakfast, Lunch, Brunch*

OHANA ISLAND KITCHEN $
LoHi / Seafood This Hawaiian-inspired eatery serves top-notch tuna poke, Spam musubi, and more. Reservations not accepted. *2563 15th St., 303-718-6580. Lunch, Dinner*

OLIVE & FINCH $$
City Park West / American Discover wholesome, inspired meals at this restaurant, bakery, and juice bar, where you'll find a full coffee bar, artisan sandwiches, hearty soups, tasty salads, and daily house-made pastries. Also try the Cherry Creek or Union Station locations. Reservations not accepted. *1552 E. 17th Ave., 303-832-8663. Breakfast, Lunch*

● **OSTERIA ALBERICO** $$
Englewood / Italian The latest from the Frasca Hospitality Group serves up osteria-style Italian cusine: rustic, straightforward, and comforting, but with the same attention to hospitality we've come to expect from Tavernetta, Sunday Vinyl, and Frasca Food and Wine. Reservations accepted. *3455 S. University Blvd., Engelwood, 303-970-8840. Dinner*

★ **OTOTO** $$$
Platt Park / Japanese From the team behind Sushi Den and Izakaya Den, this sleek eatery breaks away from its Den Corner counterparts by focusing on more casual Japanese eats. Try the yellowtail collar grilled over white oak charcoal. Reservations accepted. *1501 S. Pearl St., 303-942-1416. Dinner, Brunch*

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PADOCA BAKERY & MARKET $

Montclair / Brazilian This Brazilian bakery serves an assortment of sweet and savory goodies. Try traditional items, like the brigadeiro or the pão de queijo, with a latte. Reservations not accepted. *950A Jersey St., 720-520-0074. Breakfast, Lunch*

PETE'S KITCHEN $

Cheesman Park / American A Denver staple for late-night food, Pete's is known for its breakfasts but serves burgers, gyros, and souvlaki sandwiches all day. Reservations not accepted. *1962 E. Colfax Ave., 303-321-3139. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

PHO 79 $

Broomfield / Asian Some of the best Vietnamese pho noodle soup you'll find on the Front Range. Reservations accepted. *6650 W. 120th Ave., Ste. 5, Broomfield, 303-439-0028. Lunch, Dinner*

PIZZERIA LUI $$

Lakewood / Pizza Delicious, seasonal pies are baked to order in a Gianni Acunto Napoli oven imported from Naples, Italy. Try the street taco pizza, which is topped with house-made chorizo, corn, cotija cheese, tomatillo salsa, mozarella, and cilantro. Reservations not accepted. *5380 W. Mississippi Ave., Lakewood, 303-922-3202. Dinner*

★ **POINT EASY** $$$$

Whittier / Contemporary This stylish farm-to-table eatery produces feasts with thoughtfully sourced ingredients, many of which are grown locally. Pair the calamari and tomato bucatini nero with a specialty cocktail. Reservations accepted. *2000 E. 28th Ave., 303-233-5656. Dinner*

PONY UP $$

LoDo / Pub This casual bar serves comforting fare such as French dip sandwiches in several tempting styles (we crush the Saigon and the Chicago) and fried chicken with craft cocktails and lots of bubbly. Reservations not accepted. *1808 Blake St., 720-710-8144. Dinner*

THE PORCHETTA HOUSE $

City Park West / Italian The porchetta at this lunch-to-late-night eatery is an expression of both Italian tradition and globally minded creativity. Try the al pastor sandwich loaded with caramelized pineapple pico and Cotija cheese. Reservations not accepted. *1510 Humboldt St., 303-861-7333. Lunch, Dinner*

POST OAK BARBECUE $$

Berkeley / Barbecue Texas barbecue smoked over the restaurant's namesake wood is the draw at this Tennyson Street joint. Don't miss the certified Angus prime brisket and the house-made sausage. Reservations not accepted. *4000 Tennyson St., 303-458-1555. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

PROTO'S PIZZERIA NAPOLETANA $$

LoHi / Pizza Enjoy wood-fired Italian-style pizza, fresh salads, and a nice wine list at this local chain. Also try the Broomfield location. Reservations accepted. *2401 15th St., 720-855-9400. Lunch, Dinner*

ROS SIAM $$

Jefferson Park / Thai This restaurant sits inside an inviting Jefferson Park house (complete with an inviting patio) and serves up exciting Thai dishes. Reservations accepted. *2637 W. 26th Ave., 303-953-0291. Lunch, Dinner*

★ **SAP SUA** $$$

Congress Park / Vietnamese This smart eatery from husband-and-wife duo Ni and Anna Nguyen finds its culinary footing in Vietnamese flavors. Herbaceous offerings like culantro-capped tomato toast and lemongrass pork shoulder are favorites of the menu. Reservations accepted. *2550 E. Colfax Ave., 303-736-2303. Dinner*

SAWA $$

University / International African, Mediterranean, and Middle Eastern dishes mingle together in this Sudanese-owned restaurant's buffet line. Less hungry patrons can also order from the à la carte menu. Reservations not accepted. *1737 E. Evans Ave., 720-505-8937. Lunch, Dinner*

★ **SPUNTINO** $$$$

Highland / Italian Enjoy the eclectic and locally sourced menu at this Italian-inspired, husband-and-wife-owned spot. Go for any of the dishes with Southern Indian influences—product of chef Cindhura Reddy's heritage—like malai kofta gnocchi. Don't miss the house-made gelatos for dessert. Reservations accepted. *2639 W. 32nd Ave., 303-433-0949. Dinner*

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5280 SCENE CALENDAR

PROMOTIONS | EVENTS | SPONSORSHIPS

Denver Kids 2025 Breakfast Fundraiser: Discovering a New World of Opportunity

Seawell Ballroom at the DCPA | 7:50 a.m.

Join us on May 7 for the Denver Kids Breakfast Fundraiser and help Denver Public Schools students thrive while learning about our programming through engaging stories from our students and staff. RSVP today for this free event!

Information and RSVP at denverkids.org/breakfast.

Moonshot Showcase

Moss Denver | 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Since 2017, Moonshot has supported over 100 leaders in Metro Denver to diversify and redesign education. The Moonshot Showcase welcomes educators, families, and partners to celebrate our seventh cohort of Moonshot Fellows creating innovative solutions with youth.

Information and RSVP at moonshotedventures.org/showcase.

The Big ParTee Golf Tournament

Meridian Golf Club in Englewood, Colorado | 9 a.m.

The Big ParTee is THE golf tournament you'll want to be a part of this spring. Join Denver's prominent players for one of the first standout tournaments of the '25 season and take your own big swing against childhood cancer. The first annual Big ParTee Golf Tournament benefits the WillStrong Leukemia Program of The Morgan Adams Foundation, dedicated to funding the future of childhood cancer treatments.

Information and tickets at morganadamsfoundation.org/big-partee.

Run for the Ring

Barbara Davis Center for Diabetes
1775 Aurora Court, Aurora, CO 80045 | 7 to 11 a.m.

Join the Children's Diabetes Foundation for the 11th Annual Run for the Ring—a fun-filled family event! Race together in the 5K, enjoy the Kids' Zone with outdoor activities and a Fun Run, and support those living with type 1 diabetes. Registration opens May 15, 2025.

Register at runsignup.com/race/co/aurora/runforthering.

★SUNDAY VINYL $$$

LoDo / European This Union Station restaurant offers warm hospitality, exquisite cuisine, and an extensive wine list, all to the beat of a vinyl-only playlist. Order the caviar-topped hash brown patty and something from the indulgent selection of sweet treats. Reservations accepted. *1803 16th Street Mall, 720-738-1803. Dinner*

TABLE 6 $$$$

Speer / American This space's warm and cozy atmosphere extends to chef Aniedra Nichols' American bistro cuisine, which is elevated by haute foodie touches. Don't miss the house-made tots with ever-changing accoutrements—a longstanding Table 6 tradion. Reservations accepted. *609 Corona St., 303-831-8800. Dinner*

TAI TAI JAPANESE $$

Southmoor Park / Japanese Enjoy quality sushi hand rolls and poke bowls this casual neighborhood spot from chef Wayne Conwell of Sushi Sasa fame. Reservations accepted. *5078 E. Hampden Ave., 720-287-4321. Lunch, Dinner*

TEMAKI DEN $$

RiNo / Japanese Chef Kenta Kamo and Sushi Den's Toshi Kizaki team up to bring delectable temaki (hand rolls), aburi (flame-seared) nigiri, and craft beverages to this restaurant inside the Source Hotel in RiNo. Sushi counter seating is the best spot for watching the action. Reservations accepted. *3330 Brighton Blvd., Ste. 110, 225-405-0811. Dinner*

TESSA DELICATESSEN $

Montclair / Deli This modern all-day eatery from Vince Howard, formerly of Del Rey Deli in Los Angeles, serves hot and cold sandwiches and salads to the Montclair neighborhood. Reservations not accepted. *5724 E. Colfax Ave., 720-746-9138. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

THE PLIMOTH $$$$

Skyland / American An emphasis on locally farmed and foraged ingredients results in an ever-changing menu of seasonal dishes, like cauliflower paprikash and maple-glazed winter squash. Reservations accepted. *2335 E. 28th Ave., 303-297-1215. Dinner*

★THE WOLF'S TAILOR $$$$

Sunnyside / Contemporary This Michelin-starred restaurant from chef-restaurateur Kelly Whitaker transforms local ingredients into a globally minded, prix fixe tasting menu. Don't get too full before pastry chef Emily Thompson's dessert course. Reservations accepted. *4058 Tejon St., 720-456-6705. Dinner*

TOCABE, AN AMERICAN INDIAN EATERY $

Berkeley / American Feast on Indigenous fare such as fry bread tacos made with ingredients sourced from Native producers at this fast-casual spot. The company also has an online marketplace for Native-produced bison and pantry goods and donates prepared meals to tribal communities in need. Reservations not accepted. *3536 W. 44th Ave., 720-524-8282. Lunch, Dinner*

TOFU STORY $$

Aurora / Korean House-made tofu is the main draw at this airy Korean eatery from chef-restaurateur J.W. Lee. Order the spicy seafood soondubu stew featuring silken tofu with the individual-size, pressure-cooked rice that's prepared tableside. Reservations not accepted. *2060 S. Havana St., Aurora, 303-954-9372. Lunch, Dinner*

★TRAVELING MERCIES $$$

Aurora / Seafood Annette's Caroline Glover expands her offerings at the Stanley Marketplace with this petite oyster and cocktail bar. Beyond bivalves, try the anchovy and baguette with French churned butter. Reservations accepted. *2501 Dallas St., Ste. 311, Aurora, . Dinner*

TU'S KITCHEN $$

Broomfield / Vietnamese Thuy Le, former owner of Boulder's Chez Thuy, delivers flavor-packed Vietnamese cuisine. Try seafood specialties like the basil-topped snails served on a sizzling cast-iron plate. Reservations accepted. *6500 W. 120th Ave., Broomfield, 303-975-6001. Lunch, Dinner*

ULTREIA $$$

LoDo / Spanish Indulge in Iberian fare at this Union Station fixture from chef Adam Branz. Stop in for pintxos at happy hour and stay for more tapas and large plates. Can't decide? Opt for the Chef's Feast, at $90 for two people. Reservations accepted. *1701 Wynkoop St., Ste. 125, 303-534-1970. Lunch, Dinner, Brunch*

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VINH XUONG BAKERY $$

Athmar Park / Vietnamese This family-owned bakery has roots in Denver that stretch back more than 25 years. The coffeehouse-style counter serves up delicious banh mi sandwiches and other tasty Vietnamese treats. Reservations not accepted. *2370 Alameda Ave., 303-922-0999. Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*

VITAL ROOT $$

Berkeley / American Justin Cucci's veg-forward eatery focuses on quick, healthy food. Grab a seat in the airy space and nosh on creative, wholesome fare such as cashew-queso dip or sunflower risotto. Reservations not accepted. *3915 Tennyson St., 303-474-4131. Lunch, Dinner, Brunch*

WORK & CLASS $$$

RiNo / American This elevated meat-and-three concept from chef Dana Rodriguez offers a delicious hybrid of American and Latin cuisine in raucous, repurposed-shipping-container digs. Our picks: the rotisserie chicken, chickpea croquettes, and the roasted Colorado lamb. Reservations not accepted. *2500 Larimer St., 303-292-0700. Dinner*

XIQUITA $$$

Uptown / Mexican Chef Erasmo Casiano serves soulful fare inspired by the cuisine of Mexico City. Don't miss the nixtamal masa dishes—tacos, of course, but also tamales, sopes, and molotes—and witty takes on classic cocktails. Reservations accepted. *500 E. 19th Ave., 720-287-2701. Dinner*

YACHT CLUB $

Cole / American Enjoy classic and creative cocktails built with housemade ingredients alongside an array of snacks (yes, hot dogs are hot here) at this James Beard Award–nominated bar and lounge. Reservations not accepted. *3701 N. Williams St., 720-443-1135. Dinner*

YAHYA'S MEDITERRANEAN GRILL & PASTRIES $$

City Park West / Mediterranean This family-run restaurant serves silky hummus, a variety of excellent grilled kebabs, and from-scratch sweets. Try the beef koobideh. Reservations accepted. *2207 E. Colfax Ave., 720-532-8746. Lunch, Dinner*

★**YUAN WONTON** $$

North Park Hill / Asian House-made dumplings earn top billing at this ambitious eatery from James Beard Award–nominated chef Penelope Wong. Head in on Fridays for a dim-sum-themed lunch that showcases the best of Wong's hand-folded delicacies. Reservations accepted. *2878 Fairfax St., 303-320-5642. Lunch*

ZOMO $$

Englewood / Asian Owners Alysia Davey and Ryan Anderson serve family recipes inspired by their Vietnamese and Chinese roots. Try the crispy, crêpe-like bánh xèo. Reservations accepted. *3457 S. Broadway, Englewood, 720-739-8882. Lunch, Dinner*

▸ These listings are in no way related to advertising in *5280*. If you find that a restaurant differs significantly from the information in its listing or your favorite restaurant is missing from the Dining Guide, please let us know. Write us at 5280 Elevated, Inc., 1675 Larimer St., Suite 675, Denver, CO 80202 or dining@5280.com.

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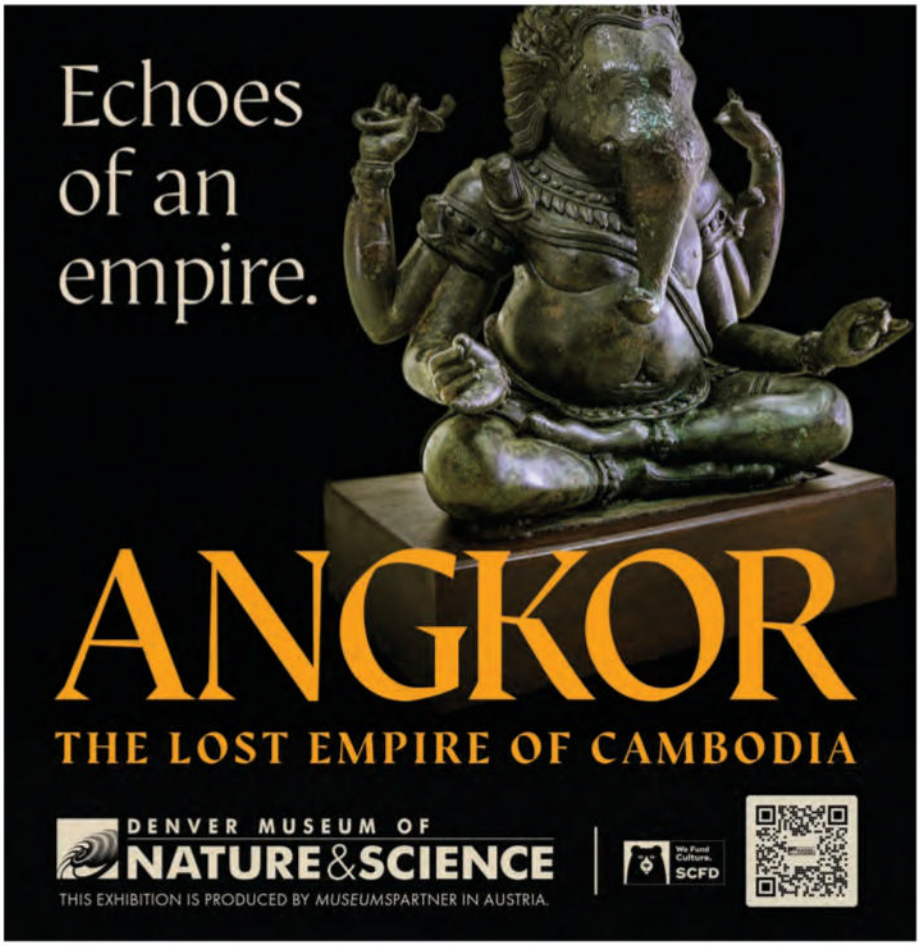
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WHO
IS
THE
MAN
BEHIND
THE
MOUNTAINS?

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 75

many calls to search and rescue," Middlebrook says. "Kit Carson is a good example."

Since 2010, four people have died on the trail to Kit Carson Peak, a 14,167-footer in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. Middlebrook has re-hiked the Via Challenger Point standard route several times, always assessing what part of the tricky terrain could be leading people astray. "There's this one feature called Kit Carson Avenue, which is a long ledge that people use to get to the summit," he says. "On the way back down, if you don't pay attention, you can miss it because it kind of peters out. There have been plenty of search-and-rescue missions, and some people have died by missing the Avenue. So, in 2014 and 2019, I made it a point to put extra language in the description."

A few years after Worthington's death, Middlebrook also made a point to build a Climber Memorial page on 14ers.com. Tributes to dozens of fallen mountaineers will live in perpetuity on the site—as long as Middlebrook remains its keeper.

THE ROBOT ON Maroon Peak. The V-notch on Mt. Sneffels. The Crux Wall on Mt. Lindsey. The Old Shack on Mt. Belford. Hikers know these landmarks by name because Bill Middlebrook christened them as such. He calls them "milestones" and specifically looks for quirks in any landscape that could provide hikers a point of reference, especially in areas where recreationists tend to get confused. Then, in his route descriptions, Middlebrook inserts a red marker, a quick click of which allows the user to view the milestones on a map. In the mobile apps—he launched iOS and Android versions in 2011—milestones are converted to coordinates to provide location information to the user. "It's kind of corny," he says, "but it's helpful."

It's also important, and not just because those milestones do disoriented hikers a solid. "Bill has shaped the way we think about mountains, the way we learn about mountains, and the way we talk about mountains through his website," says ski partner Nick Gianoutsos, who met Middlebrook through the site. "There's also an important historical component here. The names of climbers, the people who have passed away, the different trends or concerning issues

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from year to year, the trip reports people write—all that is documented and serves as a public record of the history of climbing in Colorado."

Which is partly why people like Gianoutsos and Ryan Richardson—as well as some of Middlebrook's other skiing and hiking partners, like Craig Lizotte and Otina Fox—fear what will happen to 14ers.com when its founder decides he wants to retire from a retirement that many people never understood in the first place. "That's because not many people really know a lot about Bill," says Lizotte, who has summited roughly 100 peaks with Middlebrook. "He has created this site because he loves the research, he loves the quest for knowledge, and he is a caring, giving person who likes helping other people get off the couch." But that doesn't mean he wants to do it forever. In October 2022, Middlebrook posted a few paragraphs on the site that addressed the issue, saying he planned to continue managing 14ers.com for "at least the next few years."

What Middlebrook didn't mention, but explained at his kitchen table in early 2025, is that he has no obvious successor. There simply aren't, he says, a lot of computer programmers who have 20 unaccounted-for hours each week who also want to hike 25 mountains every year and do it all for free. Middlebrook acknowledges that there could be someone out there who wants to buy the website—though no one has approached him with a serious offer, and the user-generated content on the site could present ownership issues—but he's not really looking to sell. "If I sell it to somebody," he says, "and they start charging people for it or putting advertising on it, it gets away from what I originally wanted it to be. It won't be my baby."

What he'd really like to do is give 14ers.com to someone—maybe a few someones—who simply wants to take the torch, even if that person would need to outsource the technical aspects of the site. If he can't find a beneficiary when he's ready to log off, a last resort would be to leave it in a read-only form until he finds a suitor. And if that never happens, Middlebrook would shut the site down rather than let it get "stale," a word he spits out as if it were an expletive. But he's not ready to reconcile with that future just yet, so in the short term, he'll keep updating and tinkering and adding. Until he finds an heir, he'll keep his morning coffee date. ▲

Lindsey B. King is *5280*'s former editor. She has summited seven fourteeners and three thirteeners—so far. Send feedback to letters@5280.com.

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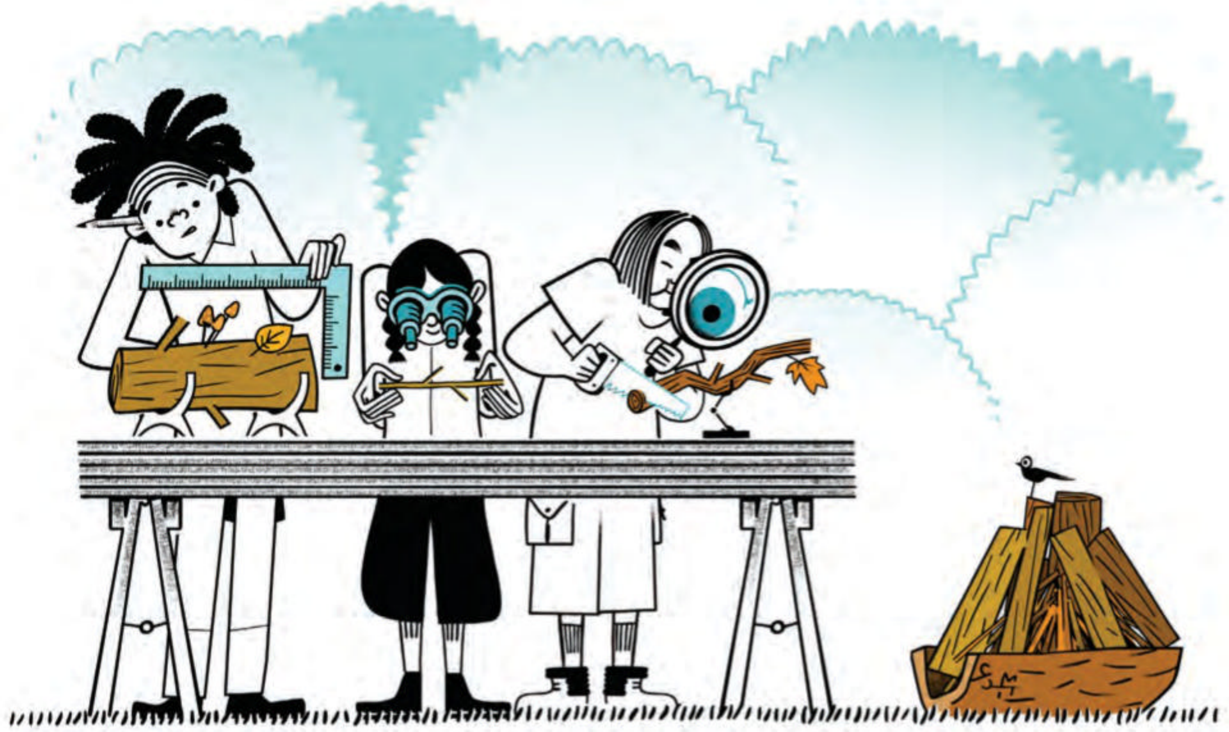
THE OVERSIMPLIFIED GUIDE TO:

Building A Campfire



With résumé highlights that include Air Force survival specialist, *Alone* contestant, and founder of OWLS, a women-only outdoor school, Jessie Krebs knows what it takes to rough it in the wilderness—in fact, she teaches an online MasterClass about it. Here, the Pagosa Springs resident shares illuminating tips for starting a steady blaze. —MICHELLE SHORTALL

1

When it comes to sparking a flame, **"there's no such thing as cheating,"** Krebs says. She suggests packing two types of foolproof ignition tools (like a butane lighter and matches) and at least one kind of quick-light tinder (try cotton balls coated in petroleum jelly).

2

Make sure your campsite is within a fire-safe zone, then gather armloads of the driest wood you can find. Test your kindling's dehydration levels by breaking pieces in half. **"If it doesn't make a snapping sound, scrap it,"** Krebs says. Stock up on pencil-size twigs and wrist-thick branches.

3

Krebs swears by the **platform-and-brace method:** Place a big piece of bark (the platform) in a pit, put a thicker branch at one end (the brace), and prop a stack of twigs against the branch to form a triangle through which oxygen can flow. Insert your quick-light tinder in the middle and ignite it.

4

After you spot the first flames, act fast. "You have seconds, maybe a couple of minutes, to give the fire exactly what it needs or it's going to starve," Krebs says. **Feed the beast by placing more timber on top** of the kindling, gradually increasing from skinny twigs to chunky branches.

5

About an hour before bedtime, lull the fire to sleep by only adding wood that is thumb size in diameter or smaller. Once you're ready to retreat to your tent, **pour a generous amount of water** on the blaze and use a big stick to spread the coals to prevent the fire from waking while you snooze.

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